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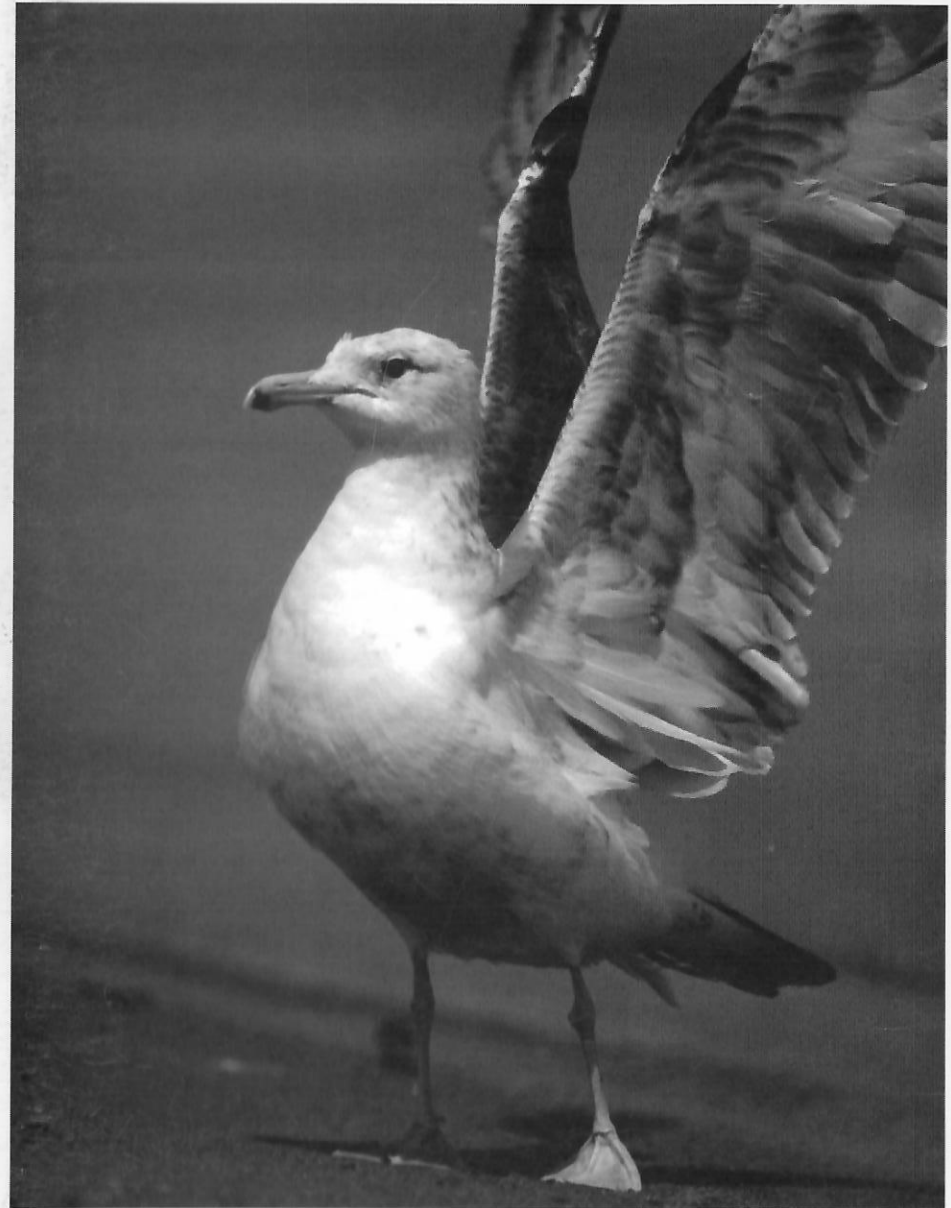
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The Ohio Cardinal is a quarterly publication devoted to the study and appreciation of Ohio's birdlife.

The Ohio Cardinal exists to provide a permanent and timely record of the abundance and distribution of birds in Ohio; to help document the occurrence of rare species in the state; to provide information on identification of birds; and to provide information on birding areas within Ohio.

The Ohio Cardinal invites readers to submit articles on unusual occurrences of birds, bird distribution within the state, birding areas in Ohio, identification tips, and other aspects of ornithology. Bird reports and photographs are welcome from any area of the state. Report forms are not a necessity but will be supplied upon request. Unusual species should be documented, and forms to do so are available upon request from the Editor, Publisher, and Records Committee Secretary.

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On the Cover: California Gull - Caesar Creek State Park, Warren Co., 15 May 2000.
Photo by Bob Royse.

Spring 2000 Overview

by Bill Whan

In ancient Rome, the priestly college of the augurs had the task of taking the auspices (*auspicia*, from *avis spicere*, "the observation of birds"). Standing on an elevated spot and facing south, they forecast the future of civic undertakings by studying birds' flight and vocalizations, interpreting them as omens from the gods. For the rest of us, it is challenging enough to look back and make sense of the past. After all, the complex weather conditions—and the phases of the moon, or stranger omens—that influence bird migrations are easier to recognize after the fact than beforehand. Ask birders how they might tell what birds tomorrow will bring, and you'll get a mixed answer including remembrance, folklore, and magic. Who knows if tomorrow will be an auspicious day? Guessing what the birds will do is too tempting a habit to give up, but our task here is to pay attention to what happened this spring, to interpret as best we can what the birds are telling us.

Looking backward then, temperatures in the 60s and 70s statewide in late February helped usher in an exceptionally warm spring. In Cleveland, April featured only a single day of frost—0° F on the 27th—after mid-month, and just four days with measurable snow, each 0.4 inches or less. Cincinnatians had it even easier, with a 0.2-inch last snow on 4 April and a final frost only five days later. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration called the first four months of 2000 the warmest in 106 years of record-keeping for the US. Didn't they say that last year? Ohio orchardists estimated a harvest two weeks ahead of schedule, the earliest in decades, and nature delivered on the promise, luckily enough. Animals are generally better prognosticators than plants; Ohio birds don't start nests early just because of a few warm days in February. As for precipitation, the period started quite dry in March, but later became considerably wetter than normal, trending into the next period, though deeper effects of long-term drought persisted in many areas of the state.

Whatever the effects of warm weather in recent years, this migration bucked recent trends by lasting longer and proceeding at a more measured—some veterans even called it a dull—pace. Overflights were quite scarce, and even though some species stretched the early limits of their customary schedules, a few others seemed to take their time. All in all, 286 species were reported, a significant fifteen of them on the Review List, with documentation for all of the latter sent, or at least promised, to the Ohio Bird Records Committee.

Our scarcer colony-nesting waders—snowy and cattle egrets, little blue herons—seemed harder to find. Waterfowl numbers, at least in most of the usual spots, seemed depressed, and even where in good numbers they did not linger long. Among raptors, ospreys seemed up in numbers, and the winter's many rough-legged hawks, along with its unprecedented bonanza of merlins and golden eagles, continued into spring. Rails in general seemed down, with some traditional spots eerily silent. Shorebird numbers probably fell short of last spring's; even at spots so productive during last fall, like the Crane Creek estuary and Sheldon Marsh next to the old Cedar Point causeway, a lot of apparently prime habitat went unvisited. No one could justifiably complain about shorebird variety, however, with species like black-necked stilt, ruff, piping plover, Hudsonian godwit, and long-billed dowitcher reported; a spring with 32 species comes along very seldom.

A very nice thirteen species of gulls were found, including black-headed and California gulls well-behaved enough to permit repeated scrutines. Reports of chuck-will's-widows increased, and well beyond their traditional Adams County haunts, one venturing as far as Magee Marsh. No fewer than four loggerhead shrikes were reported. Reports of blue-winged X golden-winged warbler hybrids sadly outnumbered the latter. Two Kirtland's warblers were captured on their way north, as was a spotted towhee. A painted bunting celebrated International Migratory Bird Day by pleasing hundreds of observers at Magee.

Caesar Creek State Park hosted quite a few unusual birds this spring, starring a California gull and a good supporting cast of shorebirds and other larids. The new Sandy Ridge Metropark in Lorain County emerged as a magnet for marsh birds in numbers better than those from much larger marshes to the west. Perhaps this county park will come to serve as a model for larger governmental units as to how to manage for non-game marsh birds. Wayne County reminded us of its tradition as a fine inland shorebird spot, and the same low water that has made the Crane Creek estuary so attractive to shorebirds has, we have begun to learn, continued to do likewise for stretches of the Huron River as well. Volunteer birders at the 7 May continuation of the decades-old monthly census at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge set an all-time record of 145 species—131 of them by lunch-time—by finding all the expectable species, the rarities reported as present, then adding a dose of luck to their hard work.

A few words on how to read reports such as ours. A little bleary-eyed one evening while going through a big stack of bird sightings reports, we said, "Gee, a lot of interesting birds seemed to show up on 13 May; look—all those gulls, painted bunting, so many high counts...I should mention this." A moment's reflection served up a reminder that 13 May was a Saturday in the middle of the passerine migration, and International Migratory Bird Day to boot; the interesting data were largely the result of having hordes of birders out looking around on that date. May 16 might have been even more interesting, but we'll never know. Other biases that sneak in when we consider birders' behavior more than birds' are less obvious. Lots of birds—diving ducks, or gulls, for example—might seem to be reduced in numbers in warm winters simply because in the absence of offshore ice we cannot normally see far enough out into Lake Erie to find them. We'll probably always have more—and more accurate—data on spring warblers than on fall flycatchers, simply because of our differing abilities to distinguish between species in these groups. Fewer of us systematically look for hawks by the Lake in the fall than in the spring, and reading fall reports we might think falcons and accipiters tend to predominate more than they actually do, because other raptors are likelier to disperse around the Lake, escaping our notice.

Successful species migrating through Ohio both north- and south-bound must necessarily be more numerous in the fall, with adults and young-of-the-year alike in the mix, but how often do our collective reports reflect this disparity? There are several reasons they do not—basic and juvenal plumages in fall may not be so easy to distinguish for all observers, birds are less likely to vocalize then, fall migrations of most species are more protracted in time and less concentrated in space, etc.—but the ultimate reason for the disparity is, we are compelled to admit, our collective failure to record the true fall numbers and variety of birds. Even banding projects yield us data for only a very small segment of our birdlife. So if reports for spring migrants—early

and late dates, peak numbers, ratios of the sexes and ages, etc.—seem more surprising and interesting and prone to constant revision than those for fall, we have only ourselves to blame, not the birds.

We spoke above of increasing reports of chuck-will's-widows beyond their traditional range in the state, an attempt to avoid the error of saying the increasing occurrence of chuck-will's-widows beyond their ancestral range in the state. What we humans see and hear—and report to others—may or may not accurately reflect what actually goes on. If we got reports of this species from twenty counties next year, it would be unendurably tempting to make some big generalizations about exploding populations, range expansions, invasions, etc., but only after we factored in the human factor—how many observers were in how many places at how many times, for example—and we could still easily be wrong. If we have reports from reliable observers that a species has arrived—or at least been reported to arrive—earlier than ever before (see the account for alder flycatcher in the Reports that follow), is it because climate warming has made it possible for the species to move north earlier, or because chance put these observers in a situation to see some of the few earlier representatives of the migrants heretofore unseen, or because new field ID techniques come into play, or for some as-yet unimagined reason?

Finally, even merely numerical data can mislead. On the next page readers will find that a horned grebe persisted weeks beyond its normal schedule, at least as late as mid-June, at a lake in southern Ohio, an extremely unusual event; we have two records this late, both in northern Ohio. Later, we report two alder flycatchers' arrival a mere four days ahead of the earliest date supplied by Peterjohn in *The Birds of Ohio*. Waterbirds may sustain injuries over the fall and winter, and a much-prolonged stay might be the result, but weather-sensitive flycatchers arriving even a few days earlier than recorded is likely far more significant. Could we say that for reasons like these late departures tend to be less significant than early arrivals? Maybe so, maybe not. Having perhaps so largely undermined confidence in human—and more specifically our—understanding of such matters, we nonetheless dare to proceed with the Reports.

The following reports follow the taxonomic order of the 7th edition of *The AOU Check-list of North American Birds* (1998). Underlined names of species indicate those on the OBRC's Review List; adequate documentation of such sightings is needed to add reports to the official Ohio records. County names are supplied for certain locations, and appear italicized. Other abbreviations should be readily understood, with the following possible exceptions: BCSP=Buck Creek SP; BSBO=Black Swamp Bird Observatory; CBC=Christmas Bird Count; CCMP=Clear Creek MP (*Hocking*); CVNRA=Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, the census for which is reported by D&A Chasar; EFSP=East Fork State Park; *fide*="in trust of," said of data conveyed on behalf of another observer; GRWA=Grand River WA; Killbuck=Killbuck WA; Killdeer=Killdeer Plains WA; Magee=Magee Marsh WA; MBSP=Maumee Bay SP; Metzger=Metzger Marsh WA; MP=Metropark; m obs=many observers; MWA=Mosquito Creek WA; MWF=Miami-Whitewater Forest (*Hamilton*); MWW=Miami-Whitewater Wetlands; NWR=National Wildlife Refuge; OBRC=Ohio Bird Records Committee; ONWR=Ottawa NWR; ONWRC=census of birds at Ottawa NWR, reported by E. Pierce; ph=photograph; Res=Reservoir; Res'n=Reservation; SF=State Forest; SP=State Park; SVWA=Spring Valley Wildlife Area; WA=Wildlife Area; ~≈approximately.

The Reports

Red-throated Loon: A good showing overall. An imm was at HBSP for N. Barber on 24 Apr. K. Miller discovered one in an Akron reservoir on the following day. Another graced Beaver Ck Res on 11 May (V. Fazio). J. Pogacnik reported three in Lake, on 26 and 29 Apr and 19 May.

Common Loon: Just over five weeks after winter's last report, one was quite early on 4 Mar at BCSP (D. Overacker), where by the 21st a local-record 64 had assembled (B. Menker, *vide* Overacker). Sixty-two were at Walborn Res, Stark, on 8 Apr (B. Morrison); on the same day, an astonishing 150 floated on Clear Fk Res (*Morrow/Richland*) for B. Courson. C. Bombaci's highest count at Hoover Res, Delaware, in 25 years was 37 on 23 Apr. Only eight birds reported in May, the later ones three in Lima on 28 May (D. Dister) and two in Hancock on the 30th (B. Hardesty).

Pied-billed Grebe: Earliest were on 4 Mar, with six at BCSP (D. Overacker) and four at GRWA (C. Babyak), where the species nests; 20 were there on 21 Apr (D. Sanders). Three adults and from 15 to 20 grebe chicks were at Gilmore Ponds on 29 May (T&S Tolford, *vide* M. Busam).

Horned Grebe: Six were at BCSP by 5 Mar (D. Overacker). High count was 70 at Springfield Lk in Akron on 18 Mar (L. Rosche). Several unusual May birds: one in Lorain on the 8th (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), one in Senecaville on the 18th (J. Larson), one off Kelley's Isl the same day (J. Vince *et al.*), and, most unusual, a bird spotted on 29 May at Cowan Lk, Clinton (L. Roush), and seen through at least 10 Jun (E. Roush, L. Gara). There are only a couple of other records this late, none this far south.

Red-necked Grebe: Twelve birds, all inland. D. St. John reported one early at Lk Logan on 7 Apr. The others fell in a narrow span. The Dunakins found one on 20 Mar in Paulding, then five there on the 24th. J. Pogacnik had one at GRWA on 20 Apr, and L. Rosche another on the 23rd in Portage. Three were at Springfield Lk in Akron on 25 Apr (K. Miller). Only as far from Conneaut as Chillicothe, a spot in Ontario's Bruce Peninsula had 401 on 26 Apr.

Eared Grebe: Three inland, one on the Lake. S. Landes *et al.* reported one from a volatile mixed grebe flock in Franklin on 15 Mar. Another Franklin bird appeared on 24 Mar (D. Sanders) and departed by 13 Apr (V. Gallagher). L. Rosche spotted one off Cleveland on 13 Apr; it remained through at least the 25th (S. Zadar). A bird found on 23 Mar at Killdeer by J. Games remained for Z. Baker on the 30th.

Double-crested Cormorant: Hundreds reported for late Mar began with 25 at BCSP on the 19th (D. Overacker). P. Lozano monitored arrivals in Cleveland harbor, noting a single bird on 23 Mar, 100 on the 27th, 209 on the 29th, and 700 by 12 Apr. Inland, ~200 were over Columbus on 8 Apr (J. McCormac), 2-300 at C. Mills Lk, Richland/Ashland, on 12 Apr (B. Burnett), 240 at Berlin Res, Stark, on 17 Apr (B. Morrison), and ~200 seen by Holmes/Tuscarawas hawkwatchers on 20 Apr (*vide* B. Glick). Late birds inland included 20 on 29 May at BCSP (Overacker) and four in Hancock on the 30th (B. Hardesty).

American Bittern: Thirty-four reports. Quite early were two at MWW on 21 Mar (D. Styer) and one at Beach City WA on the 28th (P. Rosenberry). As many as four were seen and heard at Sandy Ridge MP, Lorain, between 2 May (J. Pogacnik) and 27 May (L. Rosche).



A newly constructed retention pond on Dublin's Billingsley Road, Franklin Co., provided a safe haven for this molting eared grebe from 24 March - 13 April 2000. Photo by Joe Hammond.

Least Bittern: Earliest was a report from Magee on 5 May (V. Fazio). Away from their strongholds, birds seen during nesting season were at Tinker's CK SNP on 21 May and Sandy Ridge MP on the 27th (L. Rosche) and MWW on the 29th (P. Wharton). Three were at Sandy Ridge MP on 29 May (B&A Toneff), and two were calling at GRWA on 30 May (C. Babyak).

Great Blue Heron: Not alone, a colony at the CVNRA expanded, with a count of 160 nests on 12 Apr (A&B Toneff).

Great Egret: On schedule, the first appeared 24 Mar, but in Lake (J. Pogacnik). L. Rosche reported as "very unusual" a personal total of 31 birds in the Cleveland region this spring. Thirty-two were on the ONWRC of 2 Apr, and the previous day V. Fazio estimated at least 40 birds on 27 visible nests at Turning Pt Isl in Sandusky.

Snowy Egret: Early was one in Holmes on 3 Mar (T. Hochstetler), and one at Toussaint WA on 6 Mar (V. Fazio). The same observer detected a nest at Turning Pt Isl on 11 Mar, and six birds at Ottawa on 20 May. Only 21 reports overall.

Little Blue Heron: Down from last year, by all accounts. One 13 May near Dayton (J. Rakestraw), one at Metzger on 19 May (B. Morrison), and one at Bacon Wds MP, Lorain, on 25 May (D. Sanders).

Tricolored Heron: Probably a single bird: reported 25 May at Medusa Marsh, then on 31 May and 1 Jun at Pickerel Ck WA. Details are with the OBRC.

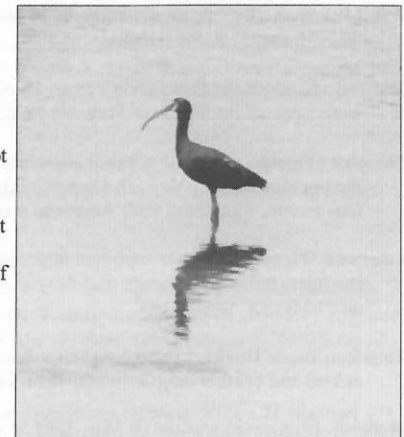
Cattle Egret: Way down this spring. The earliest was a first for Lk Hope, Vinton, on 18 Apr (B. Perrine *et al.*). One was in Washington on 19 May (C. Amos). The high count was only four, at Big Island WA on 22 May (B. Royle). Only four reports from near the Lake, and R. Harlan and S. Wagner found none at all during a whole lot of birding there.

Green Heron: First report timely, of two at Killbuck on 13 Apr (S. Snyder). High count of 15 by the ONWRC on 7 May. One to three birds spent May in the Merwin roost in Cleveland (P. Lozano).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Two were reported from Shawnee Lkout on 20 Mar (G. Redmer). P. Lozano kept track of Cleveland's Merwin roost, noting two birds on 29 Mar, numbers growing steadily to 50 on 10 Apr, then diminishing to nine by 26 May. Elsewhere the high count was 16 at Mentor Marsh on 24 Apr (N. Barber). E. Schlabach had a flyover in Holmes on 4 May, and one of 2-3 imm birds in Columbus, present since Feb, persisted to at least 8 Apr (D. Sanders).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: All over the map, but only one successful nest reported. Three or more nests were reported in a Columbus neighborhood 23 Apr (B. Paschall), and one produced three young (A. Paschall); a small colony may have been here for as long as four years. One was at the Wilderness Ctr, Stark, on 6 May (C. Hoagstrom), one in the CVNRA on 11 May (B. Martineau), one at Lk Logan on 18 May (D. Profant), and one among the black-crowns at the Merwin roost in Cleveland from 22 to at least 26 May (P. Lozano). At the erstwhile Greenlawn Dam colony, only an imm was seen, by B. Evans, on 28 Apr.

White-faced Ibis: An alternate-plumaged bird was photographed in Senecaville on 17 May. Documentation is with the OBRC. Coincidentally or not, a very similar bird showed up in Shelby, Kentucky, for a possible first state record on the 20th and was photographed the following day (B. Palmer-Ball).



This white-faced ibis put in a brief appearance at the Senecaville Fish Hatchery, Guernsey Co., on 16-17 May 2000. Photo by Gary Eckhardt.

Plegadis sp.: One was at MWW on 6 May (**R. Kolde**). **S. Zadar** and **T. Gilliland** saw two fly over Metzger the same day; two glossy ibises were found by Michigan birders the following day at Pte Mouille.

Black Vulture: A bird was on two eggs in *Adams* on 20 Mar (*vide P. Whan*). High count was 39 in *Hamilton* on 23 Apr (**V. Fazio et al.**).

Turkey Vulture: Having begun in Feb, migration continued in typically leisurely fashion. **P. Lozano** counted 136 over Rocky River on 24 Mar, **C. Holt** 165 over Conneaut on the 25th, and **D. Cole** 110, very unusual for Kelleys Isl, on the 26th. Apparent migrants could still be seen near the Lake near the end of the period (m obs).

Greater White-fronted Goose: Three in Cincinnati stayed from 17 Mar (**M. Mercer**, m obs) to at least 26 Mar (**D. Kinsman**). Two birds at Pickerington Ponds, *Franklin*, stayed from at least 15 Mar (**S. Landes**) to 13 Apr (**P. Schiff**).

Snow Goose: Hastily departed. **S. Snyder** had one at Funk WA on 1 Mar, **D. Morse** one on 31 Mar in *Clermont*, and **W. Hull** three at MWW on 2 Apr. Except for a nonbreeder lingering in *Franklin* through at least 13 May (**D. Sanders**), that was it.

Ross's Goose: One was at Mercer WA on 1 Apr (**D. Dister**, m. obs). Accepted by the OBRC.

Tundra Swan: Like snow geese, wasted no time in departing. Birders afield as often as **L. Rosche** and **S. Snyder** saw none, nor did the attentive folks at the Geauga Pk District. Luckier were **D&J Hochadel**, who had 15 at MWA, **T. Chapman**, who had three at Big Island WA on 3 Mar, and the ONWRC team, which recorded 60 on 5 Mar. Two stragglers were at Conneaut on 20 Apr (**J. Pogacnik**), and another at GRWA the following day (**D. Sanders**).

Wood Duck: Abandoning more responsible mates, 160 carefree males near Ottawa on 19 May constituted the high count (**B. Morrison**).

Gadwall: Counted at Magee were 279 on 16 Apr (**H&S Hiris**), and the ONWRC had 67 on 7 May. A few were reported through mid-May, the latest nine on the 20th at Pickerel Ck WA (**V. Fazio**).

Eurasian Wigeon: Findable when in accessible areas at ONWR from a period spanning at least 26 Apr (**N. Barber**) through 13 May (**D. Overacker**), a male was seen by many. A female, mercifully of the rufous morph, was found with American wigeons in a *Muskingum* wetland on 24 Mar by **J. McCormac**.

American Wigeon: An unexceptional migration. After a count of 25 on the ONWRC of 7 May, a few stragglers remained through mid-May in the marshes; the last report, of three birds, came from *Wayne* on 17 May (**S. Snyder**).

American Black Duck: Lingering at unaccustomed locales were two in *Paulding* on 10 May (**D&M Durnakin**) and another couple in *Wayne* on 18 May (**S. Snyder**).

Mallard: High count was on 19 Mar: 3293 at Magee (**H&S Hiris**).

Blue-winged Teal: Having arrived in late Feb, single birds at ONWR on 1 Mar (**D. Sanders**) and BCSP on 4 Mar (**D. Overacker**) were not unexpected. Two remained at BCSP on 27 May (**Overacker**), and four on 30 May at GRWA (**C. Babyak**) may have been setting up housekeeping.

Northern Shoveler: Like other species, seemed to move on early. Twenty-two at Lk George from 6-16 Apr was the "largest local number in recent memory" (**L. Rosche**), but no remarkable counts were reported elsewhere. This spring the last report was of two on 23 May in *Wayne* (**S. Snyder**).

Northern Pintail: With no notable high counts, only eight remained for the Ottawa census on 7 May. One bird was still to be seen there on the 14th (**J. Hammond et al.**). A hybrid of this species X mallard was at Stage's Pond, *Pickaway*, on 25 Mar (**J. McCormac**).

Green-winged Teal: Forty-plus were in *Franklin* on 2 Mar (**R. Cressman**) and 110+ at a *Muskingum* wetland the same day (**J. McCormac**). Customary concentrations were in *Wayne* (120 on 22 Apr, **L. Yoder**) and at Big Island WA, with 137 on 30 Mar (**V. Fazio**), but 87 as late as 7 May was interesting for the ONWRC. The last report away from the Lake came from *Wayne* on 19 May (**S. Snyder**).

Canvasback: Pretty much gone by the period, leaving no remarkable high counts behind. Latish, however, was one on 13 May at Ottawa (**D. Overacker**), and decidedly so a female there on 29 May (**C. Rieker**).

Redhead: Followed the general pattern, rocketing through without accumulating significantly, but with a few late reports: four at ONWR on 25 May (**B. Conlon**), and one still there on the 29th (**C. Rieker**).

Ring-necked Duck: Spring high counts were in the hundreds rather than in the thousands: for example, on 15 Mar 320 were at GRWA (**C. Babyak**) for the season's local high. Again, a few overstayed: on 13 May **J. Stenger** had one at Winton Wds, *Hamilton*, and **C. Rieker** observed an apparently injured bird at Little Portage WA the same day.

Greater Scaup: Warm water dispersed these birds, and no giant concentrations were noted at the Lake. **D&A Chasar** found a pair in Northfield, *Summit*, on 12 Mar, but few were detected elsewhere inland. Remarkable was **D. Dister**'s find of a female at the St Marys fish hatchery, *Auglaize*, on the very late date of 28 May.

Lesser Scaup: After reports in the five figures last spring, numbers stayed in the three figures, with a high report of 958 in *Lake* on 4 Apr (**J. Pogacnik**). Only one remained for the 7 May ONWRC, and three were found in Sandusky Bay on 14 May (**J. Hammond et al.**).

Surf Scoter: Thirty-seven birds reported, 11 of them near Dayton on 7 Apr (*vide C. Mathena*). Most were inland, the earliest a female at Van Wert Res on 14 Mar (**J. Perchalski**), the latest three on Beaver Ck Res, *Seneca*, on 2 May (**V. Fazio**). **S. Snyder** in *Wayne* had a male from 1-14 Apr and a female from 2-5 Apr within 3-4 miles of one another, but no tryst was observed. If surf scoters were "accidental to casual spring visitors throughout the state" in 1989 (Peterjohn, *Birds of Ohio*), with 32 this spring and 99 in the spring of '99 this assessment seems due for an update.

White-winged Scoter: Eighteen reported last spring, and but six this year. **C. Holt** had three at LaDue on 8 Mar, two were at Caesar Ck SP on 24 May (**S. Reeves**), and a female was at Camp Dennison, *Hamilton*, on 1 May (**W. Hull**).

Black Scoter: No reports. Seven individuals reported last spring.

Oldsquaw: All reports: three males off Marblehead on 7 Mar (**V. Fazio**); one on 19 Mar, one on 1 Apr, and two on 2 Apr in *Lake* (**J. Pogacnik**); one at Killdeer on 9 Apr (**R. Sempier**), and one in Toledo on 14 Apr (*vide V. Fazio*).

Bufflehead: Kelleys Isl continues as a haven for the species, with censuses tallying 307 on 21 Mar and 171 on 16 Apr (**T. Bartlett**). Inland high was 88 at Mogadore Res, *Portage*, on 10 Apr (**L. Rosche**). Two stragglers at Lake La Su An WA on 15 May caught the eye of **J. Grabmeier**.

Common Goldeneye: Not surprisingly, these early migrants were scarce this spring. High count was 594 flybys on 4 May in *Lake* (**J. Pogacnik**). Last reported was an apparently injured female at Killbuck 13-23 Mar (**S. Snyder**).

Hooded Merganser: A family group of a female and six young was at Killbuck on 26 May (**S. Snyder**), and the pioneering pair at MWW showed off four young on 29 May (**P. Wharton**) this year.

Common Merganser: No large concentrations noted this spring. Latest report was of a couple at Lk Rockwell on 23 Apr (**L. Rosche**).

Red-breasted Merganser: J. Pogacnik's *Lake* counts tallied 4256 on 19 Mar, 542 on 29 Apr, 184 on 6 May, and one on 29 May. A female lingered at Pickerel Ck WA till 14 May (J. Hammond *et al.*). A good inland count was 938 in *Hancock* on 14 Mar (B. Hardesty), and 200 were at BCSP on 4 Mar (D. Overacker).

Ruddy Duck: High count was 635 inland at Willard Res, *Huron*, on 5 Apr (V. Fazio). Late stays were many: 27 May at Shreve Lk (S. Snyder), 10+ in *Lorain* on 27 May (S. Zadar), six at Lk Rockwell 31 May (L. Rosche), and five through the end of the period at Sandy Ridge MP, *Lorain* (R. Harlan, S. Wagner).

Osprey: Reports of 104 birds spanned late Mar through May. After the return of a nesting pair to Salt Fk Lk on 24 Mar (J. Larson), migrants flooded through, mostly during the first half of Apr. Hawkwatchers in *Wayne/Holmes/Tuscarawas* counted 15 on 20 Apr (*vide* B. Glick). Latest report away from nest sites was one at Highbanks MP, *Delaware*, on 27 May (J. Hammond). ODOW reports ten nests in the state this year.

Swallow-tailed Kite: Documentation from a 5 May report in *Hamilton* is with the OBRC. A bird appeared at Pt Pelee in Ontario the following day.

Bald Eagle: ODOW surveys counted a record 63 nests, with 89 young hatched. Last year's totals were 57 nests and 72 eaglets. Nests were found in 23 counties, including 12 in *Ottawa*, nine in *Sandusky*, six in *Erie*, five in *Wyandot*, four in *Lucas*, and four in *Seneca*.

Northern Harrier: Ninety-three birds reported. Suggestive May reports included: one ONWR the 10th (J. Hammond), two at The Wilds on the 14th (D. St. John) and one the 29th (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), one in *Paulding* on the 21st (M&D Dunakin), a pair apparently courting at ONWR on 22 May (Harlan, Wagner), a bird on 27 May at MWA (C. Babyak), one in *Lorain* on 29 May (A&B Toneff), and one at Lake La Su An WA on the 30th (J. Grabmeier).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: One hundred six reported. The high count came in *Tuscarawas*, with 21 near Ragsville on 20 Apr (E. Schlabach).

Northern Goshawk: The first seen was an adult at Killbuck on 18 Mar (M. Troyer *et al.*), then V. Fazio reported an imm over MBSP on 1 Apr. Slim pickings after a dozen reports last spring.

Red-shouldered Hawk: V. Fazio counted 158 over MBSP on 7 Mar; G. Links had 50+ near ONWR the following day.

Broad-winged Hawk: The first three birds were reported over *Geauga* on 5 Apr (T. Gingrich). Three were seen 13 Apr in *Hamilton* (L. Peyton), then others the following day in Brecksville, where they nest (D&A Chasar). J. Pogacnik noted an excellent flight of ~350 in *Ottawa* on 23 Apr; oddly enough, they passed over at less than 100 feet altitude. Counts on 20 Apr in eastern *Holmes* were 107 (L. Yoder), and for *Tuscarawas* 178 (E. Schlabach). Schlabach remarked that the "total number of broadwings seen on the phenomenal 20 Apr hawk flight was 700+...totals for broadwings, sharpie, and merlin were outstanding for inland Ohio. Most of the hawks were seen after 2 pm." A surprising late flight of 48 was over ONWR on 12 May (J. Miller *et al.*).

Rough-legged Hawk: Fifty-nine reported. High count was "up to 11" at Funk WA on 1 Mar (S. Snyder), and nine were at Killdeer on the 19th (L. Rosche). Two were in *Hocking* on 4 Mar (D. Horn), and nine at The Wilds the following day (R. Cressman). Three remained at Killdeer on 22 Apr (L&N Powlick), and the last straggler was reported by the ONWRC on 7 May.

Golden Eagle: A good spring after an exceptional winter. All reports: an adult at Killdeer on 2 Mar (T. Chapman), an imm in *Holmes* on 4 Mar (E. Schlabach), an imm persisting at The Wilds on 5 Mar (J. McCormac), two adults over MBSP on 8 Mar (V. Fazio), one over Magee on 27 Mar (G. Klug), an imm on 1 Apr in *Holmes* (E. Schlabach), an imm on 13 Apr in *Holmes* (R. Schlabach), an imm over Killbuck on 15 Apr (L. Yoder, L. Miller), and an imm in *Holmes* on 20 Apr (J. Miller).

Merlin: Thirty-eight reports for a spring that matched a remarkable winter. Earliest report was of a bird at Conneaut on 22 Mar (D. Sanders, D. Burton), the latest of one on 21 May in *Lake* (J. Pogacnik). High count was four at HBSP on 21 Apr (L. Rosche, R. Hannikman), unless one counts six tallied over *Wayne/Tuscarawas/Holmes* by hawkwatchers on 20 Apr (*vide* B. Glick). Other inland birds included reports from 22 Apr at Dillon SP, *Muskingum* (D. St. John) and near Portsmouth (D. Linzell *et al.*).

Peregrine Falcon: Thirteen reports of migrants, the first on 1 Mar at *Lorain* (S. Zadar). Unusual was a 19 Mar sighting in *Adams* (L. Miller, P. Whan). ODOW reports that 12 pairs statewide produced eggs, and that eight of those pairs produced 27 chicks.

Ruffed Grouse: First report was of a drumming male in *Adams* on 6 Mar (P. Whan).

Wild Turkey: Lotsa turkeys. Setting aside the living, a 23rd consecutive record 19,895 were taken in the three-week spring hunt. *Ashtabula* led with 1030 birds checked, followed by *Guernsey*, *Cochocton*, *Harrison*, and *Tuscarawas*.

Northern Bobwhite: Unusual occurrences included one on the Exchange Rd grasslands, *Huron*, on 29 Apr (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), one photographed at Metzger on 11 May (B. Zweibel). Ten were at Woodbury WA on 29 May (Harlan and Wagner) and 20 in *Stark* from 15 May through the end of the period (B. Morrison).

Yellow Rail: One was calling at Calamus Swamp, *Pickaway*, on 11 Apr (J. McCormac), and heard the following day by C. Gambill and L. Peavler. Accepted by the OBRC.

King Rail: All rails seemed down, this one in particular. J. Grabmeier found two at Lake La Su An WA on 16 May, and J. Pogacnik recorded his first for the northeast at GRWA on 21 May. No reports received from the western Lk Erie marshes.

Virginia Rail: An early arrival was one at Springville Marsh SNP on 21 Mar (T. Bartlett). C. Babyak noted seven on 13 May at MWA for the high count. Six were at Sandy Ridge MP, *Lorain*, on 27 May (C. Rieker).

Sora: Good and early was one at Funk WA on 29 Mar (S. Snyder *et al.*). Eight were in *Lorain* on 27 Apr (C. Rieker), and seven was a good count at MWA on 13 May (D&J Hochadel).

Purple Gallinule: Discovered on 30 Apr at Lk Logan, *Hocking*, one persisted for m obs—though not all obs—through the end of the period. Details are with the OBRC.

Common Moorhen: High count was eight at ONWR on 13 May (J. McCormac *et al.*). Five were at Killbuck on 29 Apr (S. Snyder), and four at Mallard Club Marsh on 6 May (C. Holt). D. Overacker found his first at BCSP since 1989 on 30 Apr, then one on 5 May.

American Coot: Big numbers included 750 on 10 Apr at Mogadore Res (L. Rosche), 2200 at Big Island WA on 30 Mar (V. Fazio), and 9112 at Magee on 19 Apr (H&S Hiris). A straggler was at the CVNRA on 17 May (M. Zehnder), another at Conneaut on 27 May (C. Holt), and three at Killbuck on 28 May were interesting (S. Snyder).

Sandhill Crane: Fifty-two birds reported, spanning the period, none of more than four birds. The latest was 26 May, two in *Geauga* (K. Metcalf), possibly the LaDue area pair from last year frequenting spots further north.



These two wild turkeys were voyeuristically captured on film this spring while trying to propagate their own kind in Hocking Co. Photo by John Hockingberry.

Black-bellied Plover: Two early arrivals were noted: 15 birds at MWW on 16 Apr (J. Stenger), and two at HBSP on 21 Apr (L. Rosche, R. Hannikman). High count was 22 at Park Colony Rd, Lucas, on 24 May (J. Hammond *et al.*).

American Golden-Plover: R. Counts found ~200 in *Wyandot* on 11 Apr, and L&N Powlick ~300 nearby at Killdeer on 22 Apr. Fifty-four were a nice find in *Holmes* on 2 May (L. Yoder). R. Harlan and S. Wagner found 109 near ONWR on 6 May, and reported that small numbers remained in the area until at least 20 May.

Semipalmated Plover: Earliest reported was one at Killbuck on 30 Apr (Z. Baker), and a very nice inland high count came from nearby in *Wayne*—47 on 17 May (S. Snyder).

Piping Plover: One was reported from the Huron R flats on 12 May (V. Fazio). Details are with the OBRC.

Black-necked Stilt: Two were photographed near Van Wert Res on 22 May; details are with the OBRC. The birds stayed a total of 2½ days, not bad for Ohio stilts. The most recent verified record was from 1995.

American Avocet: L. Miller found nine birds in the Crane Ck estuary on 15 May, where T. Simmons relocated them the following day.

Greater Yellowlegs: Reported in late Feb, another was at MWA on 3 Mar (J&D Hochadel), and another in *Muskingum* on 5 Mar (J. McCormac). L. Yoder had an excellent tally of 205 at Funk WA on 15 Apr in the county which bid fair to be the state's best shorebird spot this spring.

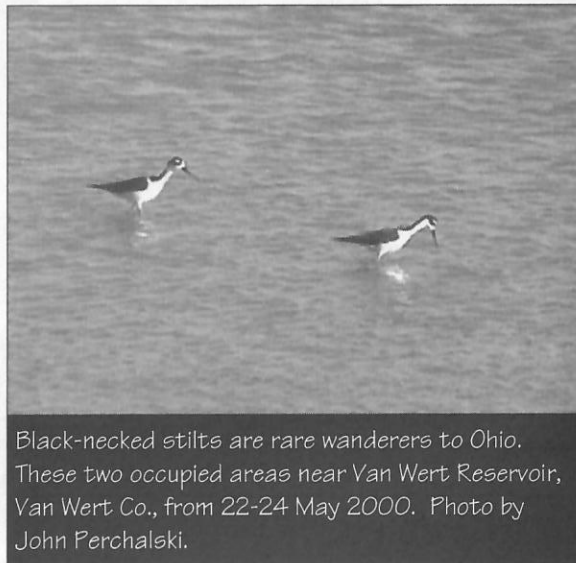
Lesser Yellowlegs: Early were two 5 Mar birds, one at Killdeer (R. Kolde) and one at BCSP (D. Overacker). High count was ~250 on the Huron flats on 27 Apr (D. Sanders). Five remained at Funk WA on 25 May (S. Snyder) for the latest report.

Solitary Sandpiper: First reported at Magee on 15 Apr (E. Tramer). Not so solitary were 6 in *Paulding* on 26 Apr (M&D Dunakin), or 13 flying over Magee on 5 May (R. Harlan, S. Wagner).

Willet: A good showing. D. Sanders saw a flock of 16 at Sheldon Marsh on 29 Apr, and J. Pogacnik a flyby in *Lake* the following day. Two were at MBSP on 13 May (D. Overacker), conceivably the same two found that afternoon at Sheldon (J. Hammond *et al.*). Two joined the action at Caesar Ck SP on 15 May (L. Gara).

Spotted Sandpiper: Early were two photographed at Lk Logan on 7 Apr (D. St. John). High count was 17 birds at Edgewater Pk on 18 May (P. Lozano).

Upland Sandpiper: Returned to traditional breeding sites statewide, few as they are, with the exception of Bolton Field in Columbus, where their habitat has been attractively landscaped. The Krause Rd, Lucas, pair was present from at least 29 Apr through the period (m obs). Migrants appeared at Gordon Pk on 5 May (S. Zadar), and three were at Fairport Harbor on 21 Apr (L. Rosche, R. Hannikman).



Black-necked stilts are rare wanderers to Ohio. These two occupied areas near Van Wert Reservoir, Van Wert Co., from 22-24 May 2000. Photo by John Perchalski.



Not only was Caesar Creek State Park, Warren Co., a Mecca for gulls on 15 May 2000, two willets put in a cooperative appearance as well. Photo by Tom Uhlman.

Whimbrel: Quickly and in quantity, 150+ moved through: six in *Lake* on 19 May (J. Pogacnik), 64 the same day at MWA (C. Babyak, ph), then eight at Lk Rockwell on the 20th (L. Rosche), and ~80 in *Wood* on the 23rd (C. Anderson).

Hudsonian Godwit: Genuinely rare in spring, one in nearly full alternate plumage was found and well described by M. Mispion and R. Goeke on 22 May at the Lk St Marys fish hatchery.

Marbled Godwit: Perhaps rarer than the preceding was one of this species well inland, photographed at Dillon SP, *Muskingum*, by D. St. John on 22 Apr. Far to the east of expected reports from the western basin (none this year) were two at HBSP on 15 May (K. Metcalf).

Ruddy Turnstone: Early was one at Park Colony Rd on 28 Apr (A. Blank), where at least several were regularly seen through the end of the period (m obs). Inland, one was at Delaware WA on 12 May (B. Whan), and seven in a plowed field in MWA on 19 May (J&D Hochadel). The highest numbers came at Crane Ck SP beach during the period when birders and midges congregate there: 54 on 15 May (D. St. John), 30 on 20 May (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), and 24 on 24 May (J. Ruedisueli).

Red Knot: Six were at Conneaut on 21 May (J. Pogacnik); last spring's only report was from this location on 19 May.

Sanderling: Scarce. Two were among the turnstone throng at Crane Ck SP on 13 May (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), and five at Conneaut on 20 May and one on the 27th (C. Holt), but the other three reports arose far from the Lake: one in *Hamilton* on 13 May (J. Stenger), and one on 26 May then three on 27 May at BCSP (D. Overacker).



This whimbrel, showing how cryptic the species can be, was but one of a grand total of 64 present at Mosquito Creek Wildlife Area, Trumbull Co., on 19 May 2000. Photo by Carole Babyak.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: One appeared early in *Paulding* on 26 Apr (M&D Dunakin). High counts included ~75 at the Crane Ck estuary 14 May (D. Horn) and 68 in Conneaut/Walnut Beach on 27 May (C. Holt).

Western Sandpiper: C. Holt detected one at Conneaut on 27 May.

Least Sandpiper: Seemed down to some observers, and hard to find after mid-May. On 7 May, ~100 were at the Crane Ck estuary (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), and 140 on the Huron flats on 12 May (V. Fazio). Inland, 52 were near Wooster on 10 May (S. Snyder), and one limped through MWW on 25 May (F. Frick).

White-rumped Sandpiper: Hardly numerous, with only 18 reported. High count was five in Conneaut on 27 May (C. Holt). Earliest was one on 7 May at the Crane Ck estuary (R. Harlan, S. Wagner). Inland reports included one in *Hamilton* on 13 May (J. Stenger), three in *Wayne* on 18 May (S. Snyder), and two at Caesar Ck SP on 27 May (D. Dister).

Pectoral Sandpiper: Numerous as always, with thousands reported. Some early arrivals included one at Killdeer on 5 Mar (R. Kolde) and one at Acton Lk on 12 Mar (B. Heck). By 26 Mar, 150 were at BCSP (D. Overacker). High count was 2370 in *Ottawa* on 6 Apr (V. Fazio), but one of 850 at the Funk WA on 15 Apr was good, too (L. Yoder). One was in *Holmes* as late as 29 May (E. Schlabach).

Dunlin: Characteristically, the most numerous spring shorebird. Two early arrivals in Mar: one on the 26th at BCSP (D. Overacker) and 71 on the 30th at Big Island WA (V. Fazio). Four were at Funk WA on 12 Apr (S. Snyder). Throngs later alit in the Lake Erie marshes, with a high count of 4000 at the Crane Ck estuary on 14 May (C. Holt).

Stilt Sandpiper: Always hard to come by in spring, one was inland at MWW on 13 (N. Keller) through 15 May (D. Russell). J. Pogacnik reported two in *Lake* on 7 May. One was near Metzger on 14 May (B. Conlon *et al.*).

Ruff: One was reported at Toussaint WA on 4 Apr, an early date. A one-day wonder, its details are with the OBRC.

Short-billed Dowitcher: Decent numbers appeared in precious spots of appropriate habitat. The high count was 357 near Sheldon Marsh on 12 May (V. Fazio). Good inland counts were in—where else?—*Wayne*, with 93 on 10 May (S. Snyder) and 160 on the 12th (E. Schlabach).

Long-billed Dowitcher: Seldom met with in spring, two added to the ONWRC's extraordinary species count on 7 May.

Common Snipe: Migrants appeared in late Feb. V. Fazio noted 13 at Big Island WA on 5 Mar, then 55 by 30 Mar. The ONWRC had 14 on 5 Mar, then the high count of 180 on 2 Apr. L. Gara found 40 in a field well inland in *Clinton* on 15 Apr.

American Woodcock: Eleven reports from late Feb. Seven were seen on Kelleys Isl on 14 May (B&A Tonneff). Birds were still displaying at northern sites in late May (m obs).

Wilson's Phalarope: Twelve birds reported, all in May. First was one in *Lake* on the 3rd (J. Pogacnik), the last two at Big Island WA on the 29th (D. Linzell). Other inland records included two at MWW on 13 May (N. Keller), and one on the Van Wert Res on 18 May (J. Perchalski). High count was inland, too, with three in *Wayne* on 14 May (S. Snyder).

Red-necked Phalarope: Two reports, one from—you guessed it—Wayne County, a female from 10-15 May (S. Snyder, m obs), the other a male at the Crane Ck estuary on 14 May (C. Holt).

Laughing Gull: Four reports, three from inland surprisingly enough. One was at Caesar Ck SP, *Warren*, from 13 May (J. Dunn *et al.*) to 20 May (J. Bens), an adult at Conneaut on 21 May (J. Pogacnik), and two adults at BCSP on 29 May (D. Overacker).

Franklin's Gull: Scarce in spring, again with four reports, three inland. An adult was at Conneaut on 2 Apr (J. Pogacnik), an adult at Pleasant Hill Lk, *Richland/Ashland*, on 12 May (E. Schlabach), one in the Caesar Ck SP retinue from 13 May (J. Dunn, m obs) to 25 May (L. Gara), and one adult in alternate plumage at BCSP on 19 May (D. Overacker).

Little Gull: Large story. Last spring should have prepared us. J. Pogacnik had flybys in *Lake*, three on 18 Mar and one on the 19th, but Conneaut was the place. Here, Pogacnik found a second-winter bird on 11 Mar, then J. Miller two on the 18th. By 22 Mar, D. Sanders *et al.* counted 21 there (previous record was 18, according to G. Meszaros), which fell to three by the 26th (L. Rosche). Sanders found four there on 16 Apr, where the last report was of a second-year bird on 21 May (Pogacnik). Very intriguing was another bird about as far as you can get from Conneaut in the state—an immature observed along the Cincinnati riverfront on 4 Apr by F. Renfrow.

Black-headed Gull: An individual well along into alternate plumage was discovered at Conneaut on 18 Mar. The last report of this bird came from 28 Mar. The previous verified record was from Cleveland in 1998; this gull has become demonstrably more difficult to find during the past decade. Details are with the OBRC.

Bonaparte's Gull: Showed up early across the state, with two at BCSP (D. Overacker) and 42 off *Lake* (J. Pogacnik) on 4 Mar. By the 29th, N. Barber reported a "huge influx...thousands" in Cleveland Harbor. A few lingered into May, the latest on the 29th in *Lake* (Pogacnik).

California Gull: A third-year bird was reported walking imperturbably along the busy beach at Caesar Ck SP on 13 May, where it remained through at least the 18th (Photographed, m obs). Details are with the OBRC.

Thayer's Gull: A bird on 18 Mar (E. Schlabach *et al.*) at Conneaut was a side-show for *Larus ridibundus*, and stayed longer, till the 26th (L. Rosche).

Iceland Gull: Seven birds reported, the first among the Conneaut gull extravaganza on 18 Mar (E. Schlabach *et al.*), the last a flyby in *Lake* on 8 Apr (J. Pogacnik).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: One or two birds were reported at Conneaut from 11 to 25 Mar in splendid alternate plumage (m obs). One was in *Ashtabula* on 18 Mar (J. Pogacnik), two imm on Kelleys Isl on 21 Mar (T. Bartlett), and an adult in *Ottawa* on 6 Apr (V. Fazio).

Glaucous Gull: Nine reported. Numerous reports received of one 11 Mar (J. Pogacnik) to 22 Mar (D. Burton) at Conneaut. The latest and best was a first-winter bird discovered on 11 Apr on one of the Findlay reservoirs by S. Ross *et al.*

Great Black-backed Gull: Unusual were five on ONWR's 7 May census. At the other end of the Lake Erie shore, 200 were at Conneaut on 11 Mar (J. Pogacnik). An excellent record was one with the above bird near Findlay on 11 Apr (S. Ross *et al.*).

Caspian Tern: Some early arrivals included one 26 Mar at Conneaut (B. Finkelstein *et al.*), one in *Lake* on 1 Apr (J. Pogacnik), and one at HBSP on 2 Apr (L. Rosche, R. Hannikman). High count was 110 on 20 Apr at Conneaut (Pogacnik); no other count came close this spring, as the species seemed harder to find.

Common Tern: Neither early nor numerous compared to former years. Nice inland flocks included 30 at Big Island WA on 22 Apr (L&N Powlick), 17 at MWA on 5 May (D&J Hochadel), 54 at Dillon Res, *Muskingum*, on 10 May (D. St. John), and 20 on 13 May at—of course—Caesar Ck SP (L. Gara). High count was 134 near Sheldon Marsh on 12 May (V. Fazio).

Forster's Tern: Earliest reported were one on 2 Apr at Lorain (H. Armstrong) and two in *Lake* on 9 Apr (J. Pogacnik). Twenty-one were at HBSP on 21 Apr (L. Rosche, R. Hannikman), 80 near Sheldon Marsh on 29 Apr (D. Sanders), and 74 on 13 May at MBSP (C. Rieker). S. Richards had four basic-plumaged birds at Lk Logan, *Hocking*, on 21 May, and B. Hardesty two at Findlay Res on 30 May.

Black Tern: Six birds reported last spring, 35 this. Reports spanned the period 2 May (two birds in *Wayne* from **S. Snyder**) to 29 May (a bird in Woodbury WA from **R. Harlan** and **S. Wagner**). Most reports were from inland, but the high count was of 11 birds off MBSP on 14 May (**J. Hammond et al.**).

Black-billed Cuckoo: Spring can be too early to be sure of breeding by this species, but **C. Babyak** felt confident of at least four territories on the GRWA on 30 May. **V. Fazio** had five calling at Killbuck on 5 May. Few appeared on the Magee Bird Trail this spring. Tireless spring birders **R. Harlan** and **S. Wagner** found but one, but **D. Chasar**, remarking on a CVNRA census of 16 birds on 13 May, called "the ratio of BB/YB cuckoos greater than ever" in the area.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: First report 2 May from Zaleski SF (**D. St. John**), and **J. Fry** had one in *Hocking* the following day. The CVNRA census of 13 May tallied 32. **R. Harlan** called the species "much more numerous" this year.

Barred Owl: **D. St. John** counted 25 on 1 Mar in the Zaleski SF to start spring out right.

Long-eared Owl: A few persisted at Killdeer through at least 12 Mar (**D. Fisher**). One was on the Magee Bird Trail 1-4 May (m obs).

Short-eared Owl: Twenty-three reports. Migrants appeared along the Lake with two over the Magee causeway on 5 Apr and for some time thereafter (**B. Zweibel**, m obs), one flying over the waves in *Lake* on 15 Apr (**J. Pogacnik**), three at Fairport Harbor on 21 Apr (**L. Rosche**, **R. Hannikman**), and one at Gordon Pk on 30 Apr (**S. Zadar**).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Twelve reports, all from the northern tier of counties except for one at Springville Marsh on 16 Apr (**T. Bartlett**) and a first record there for *Clark* expert **D. Overacker** at BCSP 7-11 Apr.

Chuck-will's-widow: First calling birds reported in *Adams* on 23 Apr (**L. Miller**). **D. Riepenhoff** reported their return to sites in *Pike* again this spring. On 28 Apr (**E. Pierce et al.**) for the fourth year in a row, birds returned to *Hocking*, where at least three were calling by 13 May (**J. McCormac**); birds remaining through the end of the period (**J. Fry**). One was calling in western *Holmes* on 9 May (**V. Miller**). One of a very few NW records, one was heard on 12 May at the western terminus of the Magee Bird Trail (**T. Bartlett et al.**).

Whip-poor-will: First reported 14 Apr in *Adams* (**M. Zloba**), then the following day at Magee (**B. Hammond**). **D. St. John** got the high count—but no chucks—in a survey on 17-18 May in Zaleski SF—73 birds.

Chimney Swift: **L. Aldrich** reported the first, very early but far from a record, on 25 Mar in Columbus. This scout either failed to return or brought bad news, as the migration resumed abruptly statewide with numerous reports between 19 and 25 Apr; high count was 250-300 birds over Columbus on the 22nd (**M. Skinner**).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: The first males arrived on 20 Apr, in Cincinnati for **J. Watkins** and in *Hocking* for **J. Fry**. **Watkins** had the first female on 30 April, and **Fry** noted the 20 Apr arrival was a record early one for his location, the previous record of 22 Apr having been set only last year. First bird reported at the Lake was 4 May at HBSP (**L. Rosche**, **R. Hannikman**).

Red-headed Woodpecker: Two surveys conducted on 13 May—at the CVNRA and in Hancock County—tied for high count with 13 birds.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Good numbers moved through—witness 11 at HBSP on 2 Apr (**N. Barber**)—but there were several odd occurrences, too. **J. Howard** reported a bird in her *Delaware* yard from at least as early as 20 Jan to 24 Mar. **M. Busam** reported a sapsucker at Mitchell Mem Forest, *Hamilton*, very early on 4 Mar, and **G. Links** had one at Magee on 8 Mar. The **Dunakins** observed a bird at the Black Swamp Audubon Sanctuary, *Pauldung*, through the end of the period. **C. Babyak** reported a territorial pair at MWA's nest site of last year. **J. Pogacnik** reported as many as four pairs in *Ashtabula* by 3 May. **P. Lozano et al.** on 21 May found two active nests in *Ashtabula* and two in *Geauga*.

Northern Flicker: Many of us have marveled at flicker migrations along shorelines, but not everyone is careful enough to count them; **L. Rosche** and **R. Hannikman** had 82 at HBSP on 14 Apr, and **S. Zadar** 45 the following day at Gordon Pk.

Pileated Woodpecker: Three reports from curious locations: **B. Cullen** saw one at Pickerel Ck WA on 24 Apr, **M. Warren** one at Magee on 14 Apr, and **L. Rosche** one in downtown Lakemore—an Akron suburb—on 10 Apr.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Decent numbers—for this relatively scarce species—reported statewide, with no remarkable dates, numbers, or locations.

Eastern Wood-Pewee: An early report came from *Clermont* on 28 Apr (**D. Morse**).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: As olive-sided flycatcher, except for a remarkable high count of 10 at Magee on 20 May (**R. Harlan**, **S. Wagner**, m obs).

Acadian Flycatcher: Early arrivals included 30 Apr at EFSP (**J. Lehman**) and 1 May at Clear Ck MP (**B. Conlon**).

Alder Flycatcher: Remarkably, two record early dates were established: one singing 7 May at SVWA (**D. Dister**), and one the same day (with five by 20 May) at Magee (**R. Harlan**, **S. Wagner**). **S. Zadar** reported another very early bird in song at Gordon Pk on the 9th. High count was three in *Geauga* on 26 May (**L. Rosche**).

Willow Flycatcher: At Gordon Pk, **S. Zadar** had a singing bird on 4 May, and 14 by the end of the period. **D. Overacker** counted 15 at BCSP on 26 May.

Least Flycatcher: Had arrived in *Clermont* by 23 Apr (**D. Morse**). High count five at Tinker's Ck SNP on 1 May (**L. Rosche**). **J&D Hochadel** reported three on territories around previous breeding locations at MWA on 25 May, **C. Holt** a pair in *Ashtabula* on 20 May, and **D. Best** two on territory on the Upper Cuyahoga River during the month.

Eastern Phoebe: One was found at Caesar Ck SP 2 Mar (**J. Rakestraw**), seven in Zaleski SF on 3 Mar (**D. St. John**), and two at Meander Res on 5 Mar (**C. Babyak**). High counts were on 25 Mar: 25 at HBSP (**K. Metcalf**) and 31 in *Lake* (**J. Pogacnik**).

Great Crested Flycatcher: With few remarkable records, several observers remarked that its numbers seemed down this spring.

Loggerhead Shrike: A very robust four reports. **T. Bartlett** described one at Magee on 19 Mar. **D. Sanders** had one on 29 Apr at Gordon Pk, an odd location, but still odder was one found by **H. Petruschke et al.** on 6 May in Fairport Harbor. **B&A Toneff et al.** saw one along Rt 163 near Port Clinton on 19 May. That more records seem to occur outside its former haunts is one more reason to worry about the species.

Northern Shrike: Established birds persisted at several locations into the period. One at ONWR and Magee was on the ONWRC of 5 Mar, and reported until 30 Mar (**B. Zweibel**). The Killbuck bird stuck it out till 24 Mar (**L. Yoder**). One at GRWA was last reported on 15 Mar by **C. Babyak**. One was in song on 25 Mar at HBSP (**K. Metcalf**).

Shrike sp.: **J. Pogacnik** saw a shrike, unidentifiable as to species, in *Lake* on 18 Mar.

White-eyed Vireo: Early was one in the Zaleski SF on 14 Apr (**D. St. John**); **S. Harvey** reported one in the Shawnee SF on 16 Apr.

Bell's Vireo: **D. Overacker** located a nesting pair at the traditional BCSP area on 26 May. **J. Grabmeier** found a singing male in Lake La Su An WA on 29 May.

Yellow-throated Vireo: Returned to *Adams* as early as 10 Apr (**P. Whan**). On the 13 May CVNRA census, it reportedly outnumbered the ubiquitous red-eyed vireo 100-91.

Blue-headed Vireo: Early were birds near Dayton on 6 Mar (*vide* **C. Mathena**) and at Cedar Falls on 15 Apr (**D. St. John**). **D. Chasar** found a nest on the CVNRA on 6 May, **J. McCormac** two territorial males and a female on eggs in *Hocking* on 19 May, and **L. Gara** and **F. Renfrow** presumed breeders at four other *Hocking* locations on 29 May.

Warbling Vireo: Earlyish was one at Cowan Lk on 15 Apr (**L. Gara**).

Philadelphia Vireo: The most remarkable aspect of the data was how few were seen. Some very good birders who were afield almost daily in May missed this one. High counts were of only two, both inland: 11 May in Columbus (**B. Whan**) and 20 May in *Holmes* (**L. Yoder**).

Red-eyed Vireo: A normal first arrival was of six at the Shawnee SF 20 Apr (**B. Royse, C. Johnston**).

Blue Jay: **J. Pogacnik** counted 2787 migrating through *Lake* on 5 May.

Purple Martin: **M. Yoder** somehow lured one to Millersburg by 6 Mar (*vide* **J. Larson**), and **E. Schlabach** saw one not far away in *Holmes* on 15 Mar.

Tree Swallow: Reported in Feb, four were duly noted by **S. Snyder** in *Wayne* on the first day of the period. **H&S Hiris** counted 490 at Magee on 16 Apr.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: After a record late stay last fall, roughwings were absent from the state only 2½ months, showing up on 25 Mar in Tiffin (**T. Bartlett**) and 28 Mar at EFSP (**B. Stanley**).

Bank Swallow: **E. Schlabach** reported the first on 11 Apr from *Holmes*; only a week later good numbers appeared statewide.

Cliff Swallow: Possibly a new early record arrival, two returned to *Holmes* and began nest-building on 25 Mar (**P. Yoder**), and two appeared in *Wayne* the following day (**A. Troyer**). Five were in Columbus on 16 Apr (**R. Thorn**). The species continues to establish new nesting colonies at many sites.

Barn Swallow: First scouts were seen 25 Mar at MWW (**T. Kolde**), and two at Conneaut the same day (**C. Holt**). The species was widespread statewide within ten days.

Black-capped Chickadee: Winter's incursion, chronicled by observant *Holmes* birders, continued with four birds there on 25 Mar and a final one 23 Apr (**E. Schlabach**).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: High count 12+ on 15 Mar in *Hamilton* (**L. Peyton**). Nuthatches wandered so far south that one was still hanging around Oxford, Miss., on 16 May. Migrants were here at the time, with one at Magee on the 14th-20th (m obs), one on the 20th on the Kelleys Isl census (**T. Bartlett**), and three on the CVNRA census of 13 May. On 29 May, **F. Renfrow** reported three nests in *Hocking*, and **R. Harlan** and **S. Wagner** three territories in Hincley MP, *Medina*.

Brown Creeper: High count 20 at Shaker Lks on 1 May (**N. Barber**). Suggestively late were birds at Tinker's Ck on 21 May (**L. Rosche**) and 30 May birds at Killbuck (**S. Snyder**) and Spr Gr Cem in *Hamilton* (**J. Lehman**). A nest started below Greenlawn Dam in Columbus on 28 Apr (**B. Evans**) was abandoned by 8 May (**A. Goloda**). **R. Harlan** and **S. Wagner** found four on territory at Killbuck on 29 Apr, and a nest was discovered on 31 May on the CVNRA by **D&A Chasar**. **D. Best** noted probable territories throughout May in the Upper Cuyahoga River area.

House Wren: Two early reports: 25 Mar in *Hamilton* (**D. Hedeem**) and 30 Mar in Columbus (**R. Cressman**). **B. Royse** estimated ~20 in Columbus by 4 May.

Winter Wren: High count 12+ at Springville Marsh on 26 Mar (**T. Bartlett**). Three in song at Stebbin's Gulch on 29 Apr were potential nesters (**H. Petruschke**). One was tallied for the Kelleys Isl census of 20 May (**Bartlett**).

Sedge Wren: One on the GRWA on 29 Apr (**J. Pogacnik**) and one at Gilmore Ponds on 6 May (**M. Busam et al.**) were early. **J. Hammond et al.** saw one at MBSP on 12 May. The **Hochadels** had one on 30 May at a traditional MWA site—insofar as the species is traditional about anything.

Marsh Wren: Outside of Erie shore strongholds, 11 territories were found at one MWA location, *Trumbull*, on 13 May (**J&D Hochadel**). Three territories attested to the health of the new marsh at Sandy Ridge MP on 25 May (**B. Conlon**).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: **Chasar** called the movement of 18 Mar-16 Apr "the best...in the CVNRA I can remember." **T. Bartlett** counted 65 at Springville Marsh on 26 Mar. Five territories were noted at Hincley MP, *Medina*, on 26 May (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Migrant peaks were 27 at Zaleski SF on 10 Apr (**D. St. John**) and ~40 at Shaker Lks on 1 May (**N. Barber**). Late birds were at the CVNRA on 22 May (**T&M Romito**) and 26 May at Pearson MP (**G. Links**).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Overflying the schedule was one in *Allen* on 26 Mar (**L. Houshower**). **D. St. John** found one at Zaleski SF 31 Mar, with 33 there by 10 Apr. **B. Royse** and **C. Johnston** had 73 in Shawnee SF 15 Apr, then ~200 by 20 Apr.

Eastern Bluebird: **V. Fazio** counted 272 migrants at MBSP on 8 Mar.

Veery: In *Adams* by 27 Apr (**P. Whan**), one reached HBSP (**L. Rosche**) and five reached Magee by 4 May (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**). Later, one was heard in *Geauga* MPs 27 May (**D. Best**), another at Sandy Ridge MP on the 29th (**B&A Toneff**).

Gray-cheeked Thrush: Far from early, with first in *Hamilton* on 5 May (**S. Pelikan**).

Swainson's Thrush: Ubiquitous, and in no hurry. First report 22 Apr at Gilmore Ponds (**T. Tolford, vide M. Busam**), where 26 May brought the latest report of spring.

Hermit Thrush: A very early bird was at Killbuck on 8 Mar (**S. Snyder**). High count 30 in Columbus 21 Apr (**J. Brumfield**). **D. Chasar** located a nest in the CVNRA, **J. McCormac** one in *Hocking* on 19 May, and **F. Renfrow** discovered four presumed breeding pairs at three other *Hocking* sites on 29 May.

Wood Thrush: First reported very early in *Adams* on 1 Apr (**P. Whan**), one was in *Hancock* on 7 Apr (**B. Hardesty**).

Northern Mockingbird: Continues its slow increase in the north. The CVNRA census recorded its first-ever mocker on 13 May. **P. Lozano** had four at Whiskey Isl on 26 Apr.

Brown Thrasher: An 11 Mar report from *Tuscarawas* (**E. Schlabach**) was perhaps a wintering bird, as there were no others noted till month's end. High count 10+ at Woodbury WA on 29 May (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**, who reckoned the species "seemed up overall").

American Pipit: 150 were in *Wayne* on 4 Mar (**L. Miller**), ~100 there on 19 Mar (**S. Snyder**), and 377 at Big Island WA on the 30th (**V. Fazio**). They persisted as scattered individuals into mid-May near the Lake (m obs).

Cedar Waxwing: Big May counts: 400+ at Magee on the 24th (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**), ~500 at HBSP on the 28th (**L. Rosche**), 7-800 in *Lake* on the 29th (**J. Pogacnik**), and 1666 at Gordon Pk on the 31st (**S. Zadar**).

Blue-winged Warbler: Early were two on 16 Apr at EFSP (**B. Stanley**), then one at Shawnee Lkout (**L. Peyton**) and one in *Athens* on 20 Apr (**D. St. John**). **S. Zadar** counted a local record 69 at Horseshoe Pond in the CVNRA on 12 May.

Golden-winged Warbler: Most reports fell in a short span. One was at the *Dunakins* in *Paulding* on 2-3 May, two males at Magee (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**) and two in Niles (**C. Babyak**) on 4 May, two on 3 May and one on 6 May in *Lake* (**J. Pogacnik**), and one in *Logan* on 6 May (**D. St. John**), and in *Holmes* (**D. Kline**). Intriguing was a male in *Lorain* on 31 May (**D. Sanders**, who couldn't relocate it a week later).



This male blue-winged warbler was enjoyed while singing at Scioto Trail State Forest, Ross Co., this spring. Photo by Bob Royse.

Hybrids of the above: A bonanza, one hopes not a last hurrah of *chrysoptera* genes. **Lawrence's:** **S. Pelikan** had one in Cincinnati on 4 May, and **J. Fry** another the same day in Clear Ck MP. A female was at Magee on 24 May (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**). **L. Andrews** was to find three in SE Ohio early in the next period. **Brewster's:** **D. Brinkman** found a female on 29 Apr in Cincinnati; **P. Lozano et al.** had one at Cleveland Lakefront SP on 5 May; a female was in Magee on 8 May (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**) through the 12th (**S. MacGinnis et al.**), and **S. Zadar** saw a male on the RTLS on 30 May.

Tennessee Warbler: Numbers seemed down to several observers. Early report: two 24 Apr in the Shawnee SF (**D. Sanders**). **C. Babyak** had 12 calling in Niles on 20 May.

Orange-crowned Warbler: Customarily early, with one 17 Apr in Cincinnati (**D. Hedeem**). Most passed through by 10 May, but **R. Harlan** and **S. Wagner** had one at Magee on the 20th, and **E. Yoder** one in *Holmes* on the 21st.

Nashville Warbler: In a hurry, two were first noted by **D. Hedeem** on 17 Apr in Cincinnati. One was in *Summit* by 23 Apr (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**), and the high count came on the 30th, with 20+ birds in Niles (**C. Babyak**). Ten were in Magee by 4 May (**Harlan and Wagner**), but they got much scarcer thereafter.

Northern Parula: Both early and numerous. **D. Styer** found the first in Cincinnati on 7 Apr, and many were seen by mid-month. Ten were at Magee on 8 May (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**, who remarked it "seemed up overall, with birds found at many unexpected spots," a view echoed by others).

Yellow Warbler: All over the state by 20 Apr, the first report from *Geauga* (!) on 16 Apr (**C. Skinner**). **R. Harlan** and **S. Wagner** tallied 65 at Magee on 4 May, and **C. Babyak** 114 at MWA on the 13th.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: First seen on 24 Apr in *Hamilton* by **J. Bens**. Several veterans said they seemed scarcer than usual. High was 10 at Magee 7 May (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**).

Magnolia Warbler: *Adams* produced the first on 23 Apr (**J. Stenger**). High count 56 on 10 May in Magee (**L. Yoder**). **D. Overacker** had a latish bird at BCSP on 29 May. **F. Renfrow** and **L. Gara** reported a territorial bird in *Hocking* on the same day.

Cape May Warbler: Below normal, but few complained. One was in *Hamilton* on 2 May (**D. Styer**). **L. Yoder** had 12 at Magee on 10 May for the high reported number.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: One in Shawnee SF on 22 Apr (**D. Linzell**) and one on 25 Apr in Cincinnati (**S. Pelikan**) were lonely, as the rest showed up beginning a week later. **R. Harlan** and **S. Wagner** found 10 at Magee on 4 May, then 20 there on the 20th.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: 150 were at Magee on 4 May (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**), then 115 on the 10th (**L. Yoder**) there. Interesting was a singing male 30 May in *Warren* (**C. Babyak**).

Black-throated Green Warbler: One way back on 26 Mar was a record for *Clark* (**D. Overacker**), with a few more showing up in mid-Apr elsewhere. **J. McCormac** noted three territories in *Hocking* on 19 May, and **F. Renfrow** and **L. Gara** reported breeders at three other sites in the county on the 29th.

Blackburnian Warbler: First report from Columbus on 27 Apr (**J. Grabmeier**). On 29 May, **F. Renfrow** and **L. Gara** noted eight birds, including a copulating pair, on territory at three *Hocking* sites.

Yellow-throated Warbler: Several very early: 2 Apr at Winton Wds, *Hamilton* (**J. Stenger**) and Scioto Trail SP (**P. Gottschling**), then 3 Apr two in the Zaleski SF (**D. St. John**). Most other arrivals were mid-month, and by the 30th the first apparent local breeder had returned to the Oak Openings (**E. Tramer**).

Pine Warbler: Overwintering pines are beginning to seem more likely. **J. Fry** reported his first in *Hocking* on 27 Feb, with birds into Jun. Three were in Zaleski SF on 1 Mar (**D. St. John**). One was singing in *Adams* on 6 Mar (**P. Whan**), and two were in the Cincinnati area of the 8th (**F. Renfrow**). By 14 Apr a nest was at a regular CVNRA spot (**D&A Chasar**). On 26 May **R. Harlan** and **S. Wagner** noted a territory at Hincley MP, and on the 29th three nesting pairs were located in *Hocking* (**F. Renfrow, L. Gara**).

Kirtland's Warbler: Banders captured a female at Navarre Marsh on the morning of 13 May, brought it to Magee, and showed it off that afternoon to visitors on The Bird Trail (m obs). This was the second Kirtland's banded in Ohio, the other having been twenty years ago almost to the day at Magee Marsh in 1980. These captures may conceivably be the only ones of the species between Michigan and the Bahamian wintering-grounds. Amazingly enough another female, this one unbanded, showed up on the Magee bird trail a few days later on the 17th (*fide M. Shieldcastle, m obs*).

Prairie Warbler: First noted in *Adams*, where they should be the County Bird, on 13 Apr (**P. Whan**). Three were in *Hocking* by the 15th (**D. St. John**). The *Dunakins* had one in *Paulding* on 6 May for a significant local record, and the first had returned to the Oak Openings by 8 May (**E. Tramer**).

Palm Warbler: Numbers—from observers who reported them—seemed normal. Two were at Cowan Lk on 15 Apr (**L. Gara**), and one at HBSP by the 21st (**L. Rosche**). **R. Harlan** and **S. Wagner** had one at Magee on 29 Apr apparently of the eastern race *hypochrysea*, then 20 of the expected western race *palmarum* on 4 May. High count was 35 at Shaker Lks on 3 May (**N. Barber**).

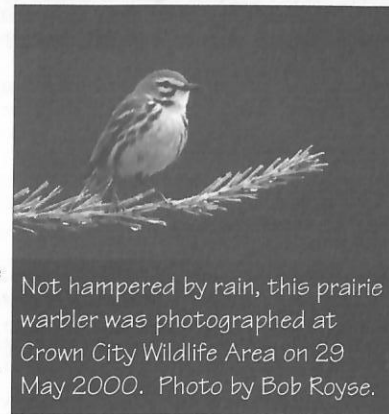
Bay-breasted Warbler: Seemed down, with few highlights to report. First report 2 May in Cincinnati (**J. Lehman**). High count 10 at Magee on 7 and 20 May (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**).

Blackpoll Warbler: Customary good numbers showed up the first week of May, the first from Magee on the 4th (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**). 40+ was an excellent number, especially for 29 May, at HBSP (**H. Petruschke**).

Cerulean Warbler: Quite early was one at Shawnee Lkout on 18 Apr (**L. Peyton**) and another at Lk Hope SP, *Vinton*, on the following day (**D. St. John**). One reached Metzger on 4 May (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**). 32 were on the CVNRA census of 13 May.

Black-and-white Warbler: An overshooting bird—one of few this spring—hit a window at MBSP on 6 Apr (**G. Links**). Two were noted at Zaleski SP on 12 Apr (**D. St. John**). High count from **R. Harlan** and **S. Wagner** again, 10 at Magee on 4 May.

American Redstart: Thirteen at Zaleski SF on 24 Apr were quite early (**D. St. John**), and one reached HBSP by 4 May (**L. Rosche, R. Hannikman**). Traffic jammed later, with 43 at Magee on 10 May (**L. Yoder**), and 50 there on the 20th (**R. Harlan, S. Wagner**).



Not hampered by rain, this prairie warbler was photographed at Crown City Wildlife Area on 29 May 2000. Photo by Bob Royse.

- Prothonotary Warbler:** A 22 Apr return to SVWA was comfortably routine (C. Mathena), but one in Wayne on the 18th (V. Fazio) was earlyish that far north. By 6 May eight were firmly ensconced at Killbuck (L. Yoder); by the end of the month, 10 pairs nesting in Geauga MPs resulted in 7 pairs with young, the rest disrupted by house wrens (D. Best).
- Worm-eating Warbler:** Distinguished by being pretty much on schedule, with the first on 18 Apr in Adams (M. Zloba). Like many others, no overflights reported further north.
- Ovenbird:** First noted in Adams on 17 Apr (M. Zloba), with a day count of 63 at Shawnee SF by 2 Apr (D. Sanders *et al.*). R. Harlan remarked there "seemed to be fewer at Magee."
- Northern Waterthrush:** The first appeared at the MWW on 21 Apr (J. Lehman), and they reached the CVNRA by 1 May (M. Zehnder) and HBSP (L. Rosche) and Magee (R. Harlan, S. Wagner) by the 4th. The latter observers "didn't remember better numbers at Magee," with 10 on 4, 8, and 20 May, and 15 on 13 May.
- Louisiana Waterthrush:** Early arrivals were at EFSP by 25 Mar (B. Stanley). An unusual local record was one near Antwerp, Paulding, on 9 May (M. Dunakin).
- Kentucky Warbler:** On 27 Apr, one in Columbus was a nice find (H. Nagy). L. Rosche had one at the RTLS, Portage, on 3 May. One was at Silver Ck MP in Summit on 12 May (R. Harlan, S. Wagner).
- Connecticut Warbler:** Eighteen reports only, beginning 12 May (at Magee by J. Miller, in Lake by J. Pogacnik) through the end of the period, mostly at the popular birding venues. Unusual was one in northern Holmes on 19 May (P. Yoder).
- Mourning Warbler:** Earliest was one at Magee on 4 May (R. Harlan, S. Wagner), who later reported the high count of 10 on 20 May. 22 May was big day, too, with five at HBSP (L. Rosche, R. Hannikman) and eight at Magee (G. Miller).
- Common Yellowthroat:** One was at Magee on 14 Apr (M. Warren), another in Cincinnati on 15 Apr (S. Pelikan), and by the 29th 20 were found in Highland (D. Overacker). One reached Killbuck by 24 Apr (R. Harlan, S. Wagner).
- Hooded Warbler:** J. Fry reported the first, from Hocking, quite early on 14 Apr. Three were found at Magee on 4 May (R. Harlan, S. Wagner). The CVNRA census of 13 May tallied 54 birds there.
- Wilson's Warbler:** An unremarkable migration by all accounts. Ten was the high count on both 14 and 24 May at Magee (R. Harlan, S. Wagner).
- Canada Warbler:** First noted 26 Apr in Cincinnati (S. Reeves), one was at a traditional nest site in Clear Ck MP by the 29th (E. Pierce *et al.*), with five there the following day (B. Conlon). Two at Magee on 7 May mounted to 15 by the 20th (R. Harlan, S. Wagner). D. Chasar noted for the species "the best movement in years in the CVNRA."
- Yellow-breasted Chat:** Early was one at EFSP on 30 Apr (J. Lehman). One was at the RTLS by 3 May (L. Rosche). One was singing at GRWA on 30 May where it is a scarce breeder (J&D Hochadel).
- Summer Tanager:** One reached SVWA by 29 Apr (M. Swelstad). A male reached last year's Delaware nest site on 3 May (B. Conlon), it or another remaining on territory, with a female, through the end of the period (J. Hammond, m obs). J. Pogacnik had one in Lake on 5 May, three were at Magee on 21 May (N. Barber *et al.*), R. Harlan and S. Wagner noted one on territory in Mohican SP on 29 May-4 Jun, and M. Anderson reported one singing in Lucas on 31 May.
- Scarlet Tanager:** Early arrival was in Cincinnati on 19 Apr (S. Pelikan). E. Schlabach had one in Tuscarawas on 30 Apr, and by 5 May they had reached HBSP (L. Rosche).
- Eastern Towhee:** 475 were reported on CBCs last winter. Likely migrants appeared on 6 Mar (M. Zehnder) at the CVNRA, two on 11 Mar in Holmes (E. Schlabach), and on the 26th at HBSP (L. Rosche, R. Hannikman).

- Spotted Towhee:** The BSBO banders trapped a second-year female in Navarre Marsh on 2 Apr (*fide* T. Bartlett).
- American Tree Sparrow:** Why they hung around, who can say? Late records: 13 Apr in Holmes (E. Schlabach), 15 Apr in Wayne (L. Yoder), two at HBSP 16 Apr (L. Rosche), 25 Apr in Hancock (*fide* B. Hardesty), and 5 May at Gordon Pk (S. Zadar).
- Chipping Sparrow:** Another strong early trend. One was singing on 6 Mar in Wayne (R. Harlan, S. Wagner); D. St. John had one at an Athens feeder on the 12th; one was at Killbuck (S. Snyder) and another in Tiffin (Z. Baker) on the 24th, and L. Rosche found one 6 Apr at Lk George, Portage.
- Clay-colored Sparrow:** A healthy five reports. S. Zadar reported three—two at Gordon Pk on 7 May, and one at Kelleys Isl on the 16th. J. Lesser found one singing in the lot at Metzger on 13 May, and another bird was singing in Bacon Wds MP, Lorain, from 11 May (L. Richardson) to at least 25 May (D. Sanders).
- Field Sparrow:** Migrants showed up in Holmes on 11 Mar (E. Schlabach), in Portage on 23 Mar (L. Rosche), and in Clark on 25 Mar (D. Overacker). D. Graham counted 25 at SVWA on 9 Apr.
- Vesper Sparrow:** Birds were in Holmes (E. Schlabach) and Hamilton (D. Styer) on 25 Mar, and three the following day in Clark (D. Overacker). On schedule.
- Lark Sparrow:** On schedule for return to Oak Openings nest sites. Odd was one near Calamus Swamp, Pickaway, on 15 Apr (J. McMahon *et al.*); a migrant, it was not refound.
- Savannah Sparrow:** Some apparently wintered, but likely migrants included one in Hancock on 7 Mar (B. Hardesty), one singing at Mallard Club Marsh on 8 Mar (G. Links), one in Holmes on 25 Mar (E. Schlabach), and one the following day at BCSP (D. Overacker).
- Grasshopper Sparrow:** Four returned to The Wilds, Muskingum, on 13 Apr (J. Larson). N. Barber found one in the dunes of HBSP on 24 Apr. V. Fazio noted 45 territories at Big Island WA by 27-28 Apr. Three were in the grasslands along Exchange Rd in Huron from 29 Apr-4 May at least (R. Harlan, S. Wagner).
- Henslow's Sparrow:** Six were at The Wilds on 13 Apr (J. Larson, who notes this is the same date they showed up last year). J. Lehman noted one on 21 Mar at the MWW, and one was a surprise at Lake La Su An WA on 30 Apr (J. Grabmeier), as was one at Gordon Pk on 5 May (S. Zadar).
- Fox Sparrow:** Thirty-two reports on last winter's CBCs. One was in Hocking on 4 Mar (D. Horn), eight at HBSP on 26 Mar (L. Rosche, R. Hannikman), and one at the Shaker Lks on 27 Mar (B. Winger).
- Song Sparrow:** Large concentrations of migrants included 40 at MWW 9 Apr (N. Cade), 42 at HBSP on 14 Apr (L. Rosche), and 82 at Gordon Pk on 19 Apr (S. Zadar).
- Lincoln's Sparrow:** Widespread agreement that the species was unusually down. First was one 3 May at BCSP (D. Overacker), and singles were in Holmes on 6 and 20 May (E. Schlabach), but R. Harlan called them "scarce," and the Dunakins reported "only one" in Paulding this spring.
- Swamp Sparrow:** Some wintered, but apparent migrants included 12+ at Springville Marsh on 13 Mar (T. Bartlett), one at BCSP on 7 Apr (D. Overacker), and 11 in the CVNRA on 14 Apr (M&T Romito).
- White-throated Sparrow:** Ninety-two were at Gordon Pk on 4 May (S. Zadar), and one as late as 24 May at Magee (J. Hammond *et al.*), and a 30 May Hancock survey yielded a single remaining bird (*fide* B. Hardesty).
- White-crowned Sparrow:** Still in Gordon Pk on 4 May were 122 (S. Zadar). At least one stayed till 20 May in Paulding (M&D Dunakin), and five till the 23rd in Hancock (*fide* B. Hardesty).

Dark-eyed Junco: One was in *Tuscarawas* on 10 May (E. Schlabach), one in the CVNRA on 15 May (D&A Chasar), one in Parma on 23 May (C. Rieker), and one in *Hancock* on the 30th (B. Hardesty). R. Harlan and S. Wagner found a territory in the Mohican SF 4 June.

Lapland Longspur: Seen in *Lucas* on 24 Mar were 250+ (M. Anderson), and 408 were at Big Island WA on 30 Mar (V. Fazio). D. St. John estimated 2000 near Killdeer on 17 Apr, and R. Harlan and S. Wagner found 25 on Darsch Rd in *Ottawa* on 29 Apr.

Snow Bunting: Lingerers included one in *Paulding* on 11 Mar (D&M Dunakin), 20 near Metzger on 15 Mar (B. McGuire), and one on a Findlay dike on 21 Mar (B. Hardesty).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Many agreed its numbers seemed low. First report from Zaleski SF on 24 Apr (D. St. John), arriving in *Portage* on the 29th (L. Rosche). Max 12 in *Tuscarawas* on 6 May (E. Schlabach).

Blue Grosbeak: Reported in nine counties. One was near Maumee SF on 28 Apr (T. Bartlett) and one on 3 May at EFSP (D. Chaffin). One was in a Youngstown suburban yard on 6-7 May (C. Keppler, *vide N. Brundage*). J. Fry had one at his *Hocking* feeders on 6 May, and P. Honsey saw one in *Crawford* the same day. One was singing in Columbus on 11 May (J. McCormac), and another was in *Holmes* for the third straight year (E. Schlabach). One was in *Hamilton* on 13 May (D. Brinkman), and up to 15 singing males were reported during the period at Crown City WA, *Lawrence* (B. Royle, 29 May).

Indigo Bunting: The overwintering bird at B. Royle's feeder in Columbus returned on 10 Mar, and remained till at least 9 Apr, its alternate plumage emerging. The Dunakins beat the *Paulding* record by four days with a bunting on 21 Apr.

Painted Bunting: A female appeared at the Magee HQ's feeders—unaccustomedly stocked with seed, perhaps for International Migratory Bird Day—on 13 May. The bird was apparently not found the following day. The record, now with the OBRC, would be Ohio's second if accepted.

Dickcissel: Large incursions occurred this year in nearby states and Ontario. The first report came from Big Island WA on 4 May (D. St. John). One was at Woodbury WA on the 12th (E. Schlabach). Three were in *Pickaway* on 18 May (J. Fry), two at SVWA on the 25th (L. Gara), two the same day at MWW (F. Frick) then four on the 29th (P. Wharton). B. Royle counted 45 at Crown City WA by the 29th.

Bobolink: First report came from *Paulding* on 26 Apr (D&M Dunakin). Singles were in *Hancock* on 2 May (B. Hardesty), at BCSP on 5 May (D. Overacker), and HBSP on the 7th (L. Rosche). D. St. John found 31 on 3 May at The Wilds; for some reason, none were reported at very similar-looking habitat at Crown City WA.



This female painted bunting entertained many at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, Ottawa Co., on International Migratory Bird Day (13 May 2000). Showing how documentation photos can be obtained without bulky camera equipment, this shot was taken with a point-and-shoot camera held up to the eyepiece of a Nikon Fieldscope set at 45X. Photo by Bill Whan.

Red-winged Blackbird: Migrants preceded the period; H. Nagy reported the first female for 21 Mar at The Wilds. The rest of the reports mostly contested for numbers: the winner was V. Fazio, with a report of ~40K at Medusa Marsh, *Erie*, on 7 Mar.

Western Meadowlark: The only report was of a singing male in western *Holmes* from 23 May to the end of the period (V. Kline).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: E. Durbin spotted one along Turtle Ck on 4 Mar. Birds returned to Metzger in Apr (m obs), with at least three males and a female accounted for. One was in *Defiance* on 10-12 Apr (D&M Dunakin), and a male showed up at a feeder way down in *Jackson* on 25 May (G. Thompson, *vide P. Zito*).

Rusty Blackbird: 500+ were at Springville Marsh on 13 Mar (T. Bartlett). One was in the *Geauga* MP system on 7 May (C. Skinner *et al.*).

Brewer's Blackbird: R. Schlabach had a singing bird on 3 Apr in *Tuscarawas*, and J. Games reported five at Killdeer on 9 Apr.

Orchard Oriole: The first report came from *Clermont*, for 22 Apr (B. Foppe). By the 29th, E. Schlabach had one in *Tuscarawas*, and four were at HBSP on 5 May for N. Barber. Though no remarkable high counts were recorded, Harlan said it "seemed significantly up."

Baltimore Oriole: First was in Columbus on 22 Apr (B. Royle). J. Pogacnik had 137 in *Lake* by 7 May, and the CVNRA census totaled 251 on 13 May.

Purple Finch: Fifteen probable migrants were in the Zaleski SF on 4 Mar (D. St. John). Widely reported otherwise, with 29 on 9 and 12 Apr in *Hocking* and birds till the 29th (J. Fry) and 10 in *Tuscarawas* on 20 Apr (E. Schlabach). L. Rosche reported "an excellent spring" for the species. R. Harlan and S. Wagner noted several territories at Mohican SF during the period.

White-winged Crossbill: After a good winter, a good spring. L. Gooch found at least eight birds in Cleveland Hts on 13 Mar. B. Creasey had five in Cincinnati on 21 Mar. K. Metcalf reported 2+ in Cleveland Hts on 13 Apr—Gooch's birds?—and L. Deininger three not exactly a million miles away near the Shaker Lks on the same day.

Red Crossbill: Unpredictable as always. J. Fry in *Hocking* had from four to six birds at feeders between 16 Mar and 3 Apr, with one remaining till 8 Apr. J. Pogacnik had one on 11 Mar in *Lake*. T. Bartlett reported one in the Maumee SF on 31 May.

Common Redpoll: D&J Hoffman found 14 at Lorain on 7 Mar, and S. Zadar four in Parma Hts on the 11th. D. Linzell had a female at her *Franklin* feeder on 14 Mar. S. Wagner had three at her Wadsworth feeders from 6-23 Mar. R. Miller reported one at a thistle feeder in *Holmes* on 23 Mar. J. Pogacnik in *Lake* reported three on 23 Mar, and two each on 8 and 9 Apr.

Pine Siskin: J. Pogacnik had 56 in *Lake* on 6 May. R. Harlan and S. Wagner reported that five per day were findable at Magee during mid-May, as well as an abandoned nest site at Hinckley MP, *Medina*, late in the month. One was at Lk Hope SP, *Vinton*, on 20 May (D. St. John) and one was at a feeder in *Hancock* on 23 May (*vide B. Hardesty*).

American Goldfinch: Big numbers included 2230 on 6 May and 6270 on 7 May in *Lake* (J. Pogacnik).

Evening Grosbeak: One was seen on 18-19 Apr in *Stark* (P. Soehnen), and four in *Lake* on 5 May (J. Pogacnik).

CORRIGENDUM: In the previous issue, a report of an orange-crowned warbler in *Erie* on 20 Jan 2000 was in error, and should be disregarded.

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Enjoying a nap, this willet was captured on film on 15 May 2000 at Caesar Creek State Park, Warren Co. Apparently, it was oblivious to the larid show that day. Photo by Tom Uhlman.

Further Afield by Rob Harlan

When it's their time to go, most folks would probably prefer to push up daisies in a peaceful, manicured Woodlawn, Green Lawn, or Spring Grove. Some of the more adventurous among us might request their ashes be spread over a lofty crag, an ancient shrine of desert solitude, or perhaps over a tranquil turquoise sea. But when it's my turn to go, it would suit me just fine if they shoved me under the boardwalk at the Magee Marsh Bird Trail.

I'm crazy about the place, and have been for years. It's the crown jewel of Ohio birding, and whether it's known as Magee Marsh, Crane Creek, or simply The Bird Trail, the name is synonymous with Midwestern spring birding at its most delicious. I offer no apologies to other prime Ohio birding sites—I've tried them all, and I do like them. Each has its own uniquely outstanding qualities and rarities bragging rights. But they simply can't stack up against the Bird Trail when it comes to consistent variety and numbers. And if you've been to the Trail on a good day, then I'm preaching to the choir.

I'm probably safe in assuming that most everyone reading this column has visited the Trail at least once or twice, or maybe once a year for many years, or even dozens and dozens of times throughout the years. I'm thankful to say I fall into the last category. Shame on you if you've never birded the Trail; if you fall into *this* category, please take a moment right now to remove five birds (of your choice) from your life list. You may have them back once you've made your first visit. Thank you for your cooperation.

So what makes the Trail so special? There are any number of reasons of course, but some of the most frequently-cited might be: lots of birds, lots of colorful birds, lots of colorful singing birds, and lots of *good* colorful singing birds, all in a delightful lakefront environment and shared with the company of old birding friends. But even more intriguing to me is the fact that we can have all of the above in a comfortable framework of predictability, based on the collective knowledge gained in a century of spring fieldwork. In our instinctive efforts to make order out of seeming chaos, we have come to know what to expect and when, and in what numbers, all with a reasonable degree of accuracy. But each spring always throws in enough wildcards to keep us off balance, to force us constantly to redefine the dimensions of our predictable framework. You can be sure that just as soon as we think we have all the answers, nature will change the questions. But that makes it fun.

This past spring was really no different from most other springs at the Bird Trail. Some individual birds were early, most were on time, and some were late. Some species were in low numbers, most were in expected numbers, and some were more plentiful than usual. And rarities were found. All of which serves to reinforce our framework of predictability. But when boiled down in this manner, it makes spring 2000 seem dry and lifeless, which it most assuredly was not. And so I offer some of my personal reflections regarding the May 2000 Bird Trail season. Let's start on...

May 4—Everything's early! Well, perhaps not everything, but enough things to be of special note...one Cape May, three Blackburnians, one bay-breasted, one black-poll, three Wilson's, and even a mourning warbler. Plenty of early returnees, all riding

along the front edge of migration's bell curve. Only Canada and Connecticut were missing from the usual cadre of late-blooming warblers. Plenty of individuals were also accounted for, including 65 yellow and 150 yellow-rumped warblers. The two golden-winged warblers were the only ones I had this season, and I worry that this bird is simply going to become harder and harder to find in the future. A total of 26 warbler species were tallied at the Trail this day, and as it turned out this was my most productive warbler day of the season. Although 4 May is decidedly early for a peak day, the weather patterns leading up to the day (a period of steady northerly winds suddenly changing to southerly) helped to predict that a good day was likely in store. Predicting migration based on weather patterns isn't an exact science, but one can make an educated guess. I guessed right on this one.

May 7—A nice array of 24 warbler species, but flycatchers stole the show this day. Single yellow-bellied, alder, and olive-sided flycatchers tied or beat my earliest spring records for these species. It was indeed a treat to hit the Trail again with birding *maestro* Jon Dunn, and actually be able to prove to him that flycatchers can and do show up before they're allowed. Glad to help, Jon. Right about this date is when I usually expect the peak of warbler migration to begin, and I recorded 18 species in numbers of five or better.

May 8—What do you do when you discover a bird that no one *should* believe? You sneak it into a commentary, that's what. We were almost alone on the Trail this Monday morning, which seemed odd for a peak-season date, weekday or not. So consequently when a bird popped out of the shrubbery a few yards off the Trail, no one else was there to see it with us. And when one is dealing with a bird that might represent a first state record, that's not good. We recognized instantly that the bird appeared most like a gray-cheeked thrush: a nice bird, but certainly not unexpected. Except this bird was a much warmer brown on the back than any gray-cheeked thrush I've ever seen around these parts. Its tail was an even brighter rufous than the back, but was never pumped in the habit of a hermit thrush. It had a mostly complete, thin, gray eyering, along with a grayish face and spotted breast. And its bill seemed much too yellow for a typical gray-cheeked. We watched it for several minutes as it perched politely in the open, on the edge of a small bush just off the trail and in good sunlight to boot. And then it flew away.

We alerted several birders we met on the Trail that day to keep their eyes open, but as far as we know, it was never seen again. Our diagnosis? The field marks seemed to best point to a Bicknell's thrush. This recent split from gray-cheeked thrush nests in the mountains of the far northeastern US and Canada, and winters in the Caribbean, having breeding and wintering habitats entirely segregated from gray-cheeked. Its song and calls also differ markedly from gray-cheeked's, and the bird is nowhere particularly common. And as far as we know, it has no business ever being in Ohio.

Why not submit this record to the Ohio Bird Records Committee for a proper peer review? After all, it might be accepted, and become an important part of the historical record. But much more likely, it would not be accepted, for a variety of reasons. And since I'm a voting member of the Committee, I'm already intimately familiar with the conservative stance the Committee *must* take. Some points given for non-acceptance might include: 1) Bicknell's thrush has not established a pattern of vagrancy that might

explain its presence here (a 1933 Ohio specimen might represent this species, but we're still trying to sort that record out); 2) no photographs were obtained; 3) no other observers corroborated the sighting; 4) the smaller size of Bicknell's compared to gray-cheeked was not noted; 5) no vocalizations were heard; 6) more details are desired for such a rare species; and 7) identification can be tricky for this species.

All of the above are valid reasons to consider voting against this record in my judgment. As a Committee member, I would be required to vote on this very record if it were submitted—and based on the reasoning given above, in the spirit of conservatism I'd probably have to cast a "no" vote on my own record, even though I believe it to be correctly identified. And that would be about as much fun as a swift kick in the head. So here we stand, in rarity limbo. Perhaps the future will show us that Bicknell's thrush isn't so unbelievable for Ohio after all, and perhaps, in time, this record might have some significance after all. But, at the very least, it helped add extra spice to this column.

May 13—International Migratory Bird Day is not usually one of my favorite days to bird the Trail. Yes, it falls during the traditional peak of migration, but as it's on a weekend the Trail is typically clogged with as many birders as birds. Attendance seemed a bit down this year, which made it easier to slowly roam the boardwalk and rack up 20 species of warblers, although 16 species were represented by five or fewer individuals, with 15 northern waterthrushes a notable exception. We had decided to arrive early, hoping to avoid the worst of the crowds, but apparently we should have arrived *very* early. As it turned out, perennial IMBD big-sitter Tom Bartlett and co-miserant Vic Fazio had heard a singing chuck-will's-widow before dawn, providing a long-overdue first record for the Trail. Although we looked for it after dawn, we had to settle for a nifty whip-poor-will in the woods behind one of the tents set up for the IMBD festivities.

The undisputed star of the day, however, and of the spring for me, was Ohio's second-ever painted bunting, a fetching female dining at the feeders of the Sportsmen's Migratory Bird Center for most of the day. Having been out of state for the first Ohio record a few years back, this was a real treat for me, as I'm sure it was for the hordes of other observers present that day. Chalk one up for the good guys.

I'm still at a loss, however, to understand one troubling aspect of what turned out to be one of the Trail's finest rarity days ever. Normally, a confirmed Kirtland's warbler on the trail is BIG news, but most people present this day probably had no idea that a Kirtland's was even present. This particular female had been captured in banding nets at Navarre Marsh, some eight miles down the road from the Trail. To my knowledge, all of the birds on display at the banding tent at Magee had been captured at Navarre and driven over to Magee for banding under public scrutiny. I can understand how this may be beneficial to birds in general (banding demonstrations bring the public closer to the birds, and one hopes they will engender increased concern for bird and habitat protection), but I don't see how this arrangement benefits the individual birds captured for banding. And I certainly can't understand the decision to transport a Kirtland's warbler, a critically Endangered Species, the eight miles so that it might be banded in public. Obviously, any banding-related avian fatality is most unfortunate, but one might at least say that it was offered on the altar of "the interests of science."

But I'm not sure what interests were served by the decisions made regarding this Kirtland's. Its loss would have been tragic, and verge on criminality, if only morally. As far as I know, it was returned to Navarre and released there, after being banded at Magee.

Some thoughts spring to mind: 1) the bird could have been banded at Navarre and then released there—the public can view dozens of Kirtland's warblers on their breeding grounds just a few hours' drive away in Michigan—as I doubt anyone would want to risk this individual just for the sake of seeing it banded; 2) if no licensed banders were present at Navarre to band it there, the bird could simply have been photographed and released unbanded, thereby eliminating the risks involved in transport to Magee; 3) even worse, the persons operating the nets at Navarre may not have identified the bird as a Kirtland's, and unknowingly sent it along with the other more common species over to Magee. Regardless of the thought-process involved, I was personally greatly disappointed by the decision to transport it to Magee, and as you can probably sense, I remain disgusted with the whole scenario. This diatribe isn't meant to condemn bird banding or bird banders, not by a long shot. Nor is it meant to condemn the good-faith efforts over the years on the part of the banding operation in question. But in this case, questions need to be answered. Honest lapses of judgment happen. Let's hope that's all it was in this case.

May 20—Back to birding as it should be—fun. Twenty-two warbler species were still present but eight were represented by only a single individual. Included in these eight were a late orange-crowned warbler and my only Connecticut warbler for the season. Ten mourning warblers were as expected for the date, given a good migrational push. Ten yellow-bellied flycatchers and five alder flycatchers were also in nice but reasonable numbers, while a summer tanager was an unexpected bonus.

May 24—My last day at the Trail this spring. I usually try to make it at least once during early June, if only to be slowly weaned rather than quit cold-turkey. When birders are outnumbered by supercilious beach-goers on the boardwalk, it is time to move on. Not to be dissuaded, however, two olive-sided flycatchers were still present, and 11 species of warblers lingered bravely in the face of the advancing season. And fittingly, my first-ever female Lawrence's warbler, the recessive hybrid of blue-winged and golden-winged warblers, put in an all-too-brief appearance in the shrubbery at the far west end of the parking lot. She popped quickly into view, peeked around for a bit, and then was gone. A fleeting glimpse—spring migration in a nutshell, I should think.

Stately Visitors... Common Ravens in Ohio: The Past, Present, and Future by Mike Busam

Common Ravens in Ohio: A Brief History

"The Raven," wrote William Dawson in 1903, "has more dignity, and as a species, less flexibility than the Crow." Tied closely as they were to the once extensive forests of Ohio, it is not surprising that soon after Europeans settled Ohio, ravens began disappearing along with the state's woodlands. By the early 1800s, ravens were no longer to be found in Ohio's central and southern counties, except as occasional wanderers, whereas in northern Ohio they were "still frequently encountered near Cleveland during the 1850s," though by the 1870s that had changed, and ravens were reduced in status to rare winter visitors (Peterjohn 1989).

Ravens clung to the Black Swamp area in northwestern Ohio until the late 1880s, but essentially disappeared from that part of the state between 1900 and 1905 (Peterjohn 1989). In Volume I of *The Birds of Ohio*, Dawson writes of unsubstantiated claims of ravens breeding in Fulton County in the late 1800s, but notes that for all practical purposes "the relentless warfare of the pioneers has thrust [the common raven] almost entirely out of bounds."

And Ohio remained out of bounds to ravens until early 1946. While walking on the frozen Lake Erie near a group of ice fishing shanties, Milton Trautman observed a raven on three separate occasions between 20 January and 6 March. On each occasion, the raven was seen flying from South Bass Island towards Middle Bass Island. "The characteristics of this distinctive species were noted," he wrote (Trautman 1956), "especially the wedge-shaped tail, soaring flight, and croaking voice." On 20 January he was also able to make a direct comparison of the raven with six nearby crows. Fifty-two years would pass before Ohio's next accepted common raven sighting in March of 1998, when once again the species was seen along Lake Erie. A year later, the Ohio Bird Records Committee accepted yet another raven sighting. On top of these two confirmed records have been a few tantalizing, though unconfirmed, sightings, including one from the summer of 1999 at the Egypt Valley Wildlife Area in Belmont County (ODNR news release, 10 Jan 2000).

So given the spate of recent confirmed and possible sightings, can Ohio birders expect to start seeing more common ravens in the future? Will common ravens once again breed in Ohio? Maybe...one thing is for certain, though: populations of breeding common ravens are nearly all around us—"us" being the state of Ohio.

Common Ravens in States Bordering Ohio

Of the five states and one Canadian province bordering Ohio—Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, and Ontario—only Indiana lacks a population of breeding common ravens. Never truly abundant in the Hoosier State, ravens disappeared completely as breeders by the mid-1890s. Prior to that, the most regular breeding site was a sandstone cliff known as "Ravens Rock," located in southwestern Indiana's Dubois County (Mumford and Keller 1984). The last recorded year for breeding ravens at Ravens Rock was 1894, also the year of the last 19th-century sighting of the

species in northern Indiana. Indiana has only two accepted common raven records this century: in 1919 and in 1953, single ravens were seen along Lake Michigan (Mumford and Keller 1984). Indiana birders have reported additional raven sightings in more recent years, but none was confirmed (Ken Brock, pers. comm.).

Looking to the north, Michigan has a growing raven population in the northern half of the Lower Peninsula and throughout the entire Upper Peninsula, an encouraging trend that generally mirrors the breeding range ravens occupied at the time the state was settled (Brewer *et al.* 1991). Still, the history of common ravens in Michigan parallels with those in Ohio and Indiana (as well as the other bordering states, for that matter). As Michigan was settled, ravens became scarce before finally disappearing from the southern part of the LP by the end of the 1800s. The last record for Detroit is from 1885 (Julie Craves, Michigan Birds listserv, 15 Feb 2000). Prior to that, ravens were considered to be on even terms with American crows in the Lansing area as late as the 1870s, but 1890 saw the last confirmed nesting pair in the state's southern lower peninsula (Brewer *et al.* 1991).

During the 1940s raven populations in Michigan finally began to bounce back from the effects of logging and human persecution. Their success has been such that ravens are now "widespread and increasing in the northern LP," and increasing in abundance in the UP (Brewer *et al.* 1991).

Pennsylvania ravens, likewise, have also seen the best of times and the worst of times, and are now regaining much of what they surrendered to human encroachment during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The first paragraph of the entry for the species in *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Pennsylvania* says it all: "Once thought to be nearing extirpation, the Common Raven is currently widespread and locally common in Pennsylvania. It was 'confirmed' as a breeding bird in nearly half of the counties in the state" including breeding sites a mere 40 to 50 miles east of the Ohio border (Brauning 1992). There are possible nest sites in Clarion County, in central western Pennsylvania, but the confirmed breeding sites closest to Ohio are in Warren County, along Lake Erie (Brauning 1992). The return of forests, along with the species' increased tolerance of humans, adjustments to new food sources such as landfills and roadkill, and protection from senseless slaughter are cited as primary factors behind the return of ravens in Pennsylvania, as well as the rest of the northeastern U.S. (Brauning 1992).¹ Breeding Pennsylvania ravens stick almost exclusively to the "Allegheny High Plateau, Allegheny Mountain, and Appalachian Mountain sections," and are "most frequent by far" in the Allegheny High Plateau, in large part because the Susquehanna River and its tributaries have cut into the sandstone "deeply entrenched, rock-walled valleys," which make ideal nesting sites for ravens (Brauning 1992).

In West Virginia, ravens are "regular permanent resident[s] in all mountain counties" along the Appalachians on the state's eastern edge, and there is "breeding evidence throughout the Allegheny Mountains region," while strays are occasionally reported west of the breeding range (Buckelew and Hall 1994). As is the case throughout the Appalachians, ravens are increasing in number in West Virginia. For example, between 1966 and 1987 the ten BBS routes that annually reported common ravens also reported a 12 percent annual increase in the size of the population (Buckelew and Hall 1994).

Common ravens in Kentucky are currently restricted to the Cumberland Mountains in the extreme southeastern section of the state, though ravens have also been

sighted recently in the Cumberland Plateau, an area ravens occupied before their disappearance from Kentucky prior to the 1930s (Mengel 1965, Palmer-Ball 1996). The current breeding population was rediscovered in the southeastern mountains of Kentucky in 1969, and ravens are "usually found along or near the ridge crests" in heavily wooded areas (Palmer-Ball 1996).

**"'Tis some visitor...Only this and nothing more"
Edgar Allen Poe, "The Raven"**

For the better part of this century, Ohio birders have had to accept that in all likelihood common ravens, if located at all, would have to be visitors, and unfortunately nothing more. Unlike the narrator facing the ominous corvine herald in Poe's poem, however, we birders hope that the raven will become something *much* more than just a visitor. With healthy breeding populations up and down the Appalachian Mountains in West Virginia and central Pennsylvania, ever so close to Ohio, and with the spate of Ohio sightings in recent years (some verified, some not), it's fair to ask if common ravens might expand their breeding range into the Buckeye State.

In Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Kentucky, ravens reclaimed habitats from which they had once been expelled. While breeding ravens are "flexible," and will nest in diverse locations including in pine trees, on "power lines, on radar towers, on buildings above busy streets, under highway overpasses," etc., they prefer "whenever possible . . . to nest on rock shelves tucked under overhangs on cliffs" (Heinrich 1999). In Ohio, the east-central and southeastern part of the state may offer the most suitable habitat for breeding ravens. Large tracts of forest, fewer people, and steep sandstone cliffs, including those left over from strip mining operations, should make this part of the state particularly attractive to ravens looking for a home. Thus, the unconfirmed raven sighting at Egypt Valley Wildlife Area (in part a reclaimed strip mine) in Belmont County during the 1999 Ohio Grassland Breeding Bird Survey is particularly tantalizing, and offers cause for hope.

**"The ravens' calls were full of promise."
Bernd Heinrich, *Mind of the Raven***

In his introduction to *Mind of the Raven*, Bernd Heinrich writes of a dream he had in which he was walking through a "mysterious forest," drawn towards the "croaking of ravens, one of the most awesome sounds I know." In his dream, writes Heinrich, "the ravens' calls told me that their nest was near. The ravens' calls were full of promise. I felt I was close to something new and exciting, and would find it" (Heinrich 1999).

Ohio birders, too, might be close to something new and exciting, as witnessed by a number of common raven sightings in Ohio between 1994 and 1999. I'll focus here on the two confirmed sightings, but will also take a look at two unconfirmed ones as well, since they come from areas of the state that potentially offer nesting habitat for ravens. Ultimately, these sightings may merely be records of wandering birds. Then again, looking back from some point in the future, they might prove to have been the forerunners of the return of this one-time Ohio native.

Recent Common Raven Sightings in Ohio

"In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore."

Edgar Allen Poe, "The Raven"

On 27 March 1998 at Lake County's Lakeshore Metropark, while watching hawks along the shore, John Pogacnik saw what he initially thought was a buteo—likely a red-tailed hawk, since "it didn't show the dihedral of a rough-legged hawk" (Pogacnik, pers. comm.). He got a better look at the bird as it flew approximately 100 yards off the Lake Erie shoreline, and realized he was watching a raven. Unlike an American crow, this bird was soaring and flying with wingtips angled back. It had a strongly wedge-shaped tail, and "the head and bill were much longer and extended farther in front of the forewing than with crow. The bill was also thicker. The wings were longish and the 'fingers' of the wingtips were angled back" (Pogacnik, OBRC documentation, 31 Mar 1998). Luckily, Pogacnik was able to take a photo of this bird with a 500-millimeter lens as it flew west, "soar[ing] mostly, flapping only occasionally" (Pogacnik, loc cit). For many seasoned raven observers, the manner of flight described by Pogacnik is especially important when separating common ravens from crows. Crows flap almost constantly when flying, whereas ravens often glide, soar, and engage in aerial acrobatics. Ravens are "real masters of the air," notes West Virginia naturalist Jim Phillips (Phillips, pers. comm.).

The Ohio Birds Record Committee accepted the 1998 Lake County sighting, making it the first confirmed common raven sighting in Ohio since Trautman's, also a Lake Erie bird, in 1946.²

Just over a year after the Lake County sighting, David Hochadel observed two ravens in North Bloomfield, Trumbull County, on 4 April 1999. Like Pogacnik, Hochadel thought he was looking at a raptor when the first of the ravens came into view. "The manner of flight," wrote Hochadel in his documentation, "...was buteo like (to be more specific I would say like a Red-tailed Hawk) with alternate flapping and gliding." Additionally, the raven's "wings were long and best described as shaped like a large buteo's wings" (Hochadel, OBRC documentation, 4 Apr 1999). Hochadel also noted the wedge-shaped tail, heavy body, shaggy throat feathers, a head that was "thicker/wider than a crow's in proportion to the body," and "massive" bill, "thicker than a crow's, as long as the head itself, and tapered quickly to a point" (Hochadel, loc cit). The bird landed in a fallow field of grasses and weeds, and it was only then that Hochadel realized there was a second bird in the same spot. Though the second bird was partially obscured by vegetation, its head and bill were similar to those of the first raven (Hochadel, loc cit).

In the summer of 1999, the Trumbull County raven sighting was accepted by the OBRC. Two Committee members voted to reject the record, not because they didn't



This common raven flew past Lakeshore Metropark, Lake Co., on 27 March 1998 providing the first confirmed sighting of the species since 1946. Photo by John Pogacnik.

believe the sighting, but rather because they felt more information and additional observers would have helped strengthen the case. For instance, no mention was made of vocalizations on the part of the Trumbull County birds, and in this case there was no photographic documentation. Another OBRC member noted in his comments that he himself had seen ravens in Ohio on two separate occasions in recent years but hadn't sufficient evidence to support either sighting. In any case, after waiting 52 years between confirmed common raven sightings, Ohio birders produced two confirmed sightings within the space of 13 months.

"It's tough to unextirpate something."

In addition to the two confirmed records from 1998 and 1999, there have been a number of reports that haven't been officially accepted, yet which are well worth mention. The most recent such sighting occurred in the summer of 1999. As part of the Ohio Grasslands Breeding Bird Survey, a number of experienced observers were regularly out in the field looking for grassland birds in four wildlife areas located among reclaimed strip mines in the east-central and southeastern part of Ohio (McCormac 1999). These wildlife areas also lie in the heart of Ohio's best potential habitat for breeding ravens. During the summer, two observers sighted a large corvid during survey work at Egypt Valley Wildlife Area in Belmont County. Unfortunately, "the bird was uncooperative" and the two experienced birders who made the observation could get only fleeting looks at the bird (ODNR news release, 10 Jan 2000). Thus the record will remain unconfirmed, but on the heels of the accepted sightings of 1998 and 1999, this interesting sighting underscores the importance of being alert for the possibility that common ravens might be wandering around east-central and southeastern Ohio.

Documentation from another reported raven sighting from southeastern Ohio, this time from Noble County, was submitted to the OBRC in 1994. On 7 March 1994 Ben Morrison noticed a bird soaring directly overhead. He passed it off as a crow, until he and the other birders with him heard the "low guttural croaking" call of a common raven. They watched the bird as it circled overhead, and noticed the "larger-than-crow size and wedge-shaped tail" (Ben Morrison, pers. comm.). In April of 1995, Morrison saw another large corvid on his farm, a half-mile from the site of the 1994 sighting. While the bird was silent, it flew so close to Morrison that he "could see the large beak and that it was definitely larger than a crow" (Morrison, pers. comm.).

Morrison's 1994 sighting was not accepted by the OBRC. He remarks that "at the time the [common] raven was considered extirpated and it's tough to unextirpate something" (Morrison, pers. comm.). And it's true. The burden of proof in sightings of unusual and rare birds falls squarely on the observer, which underscores again the necessity to take very detailed field notes of any unusual species one encounters, particularly when it concerns one regarded as extirpated. Even when an observer does the legwork and gathers the notes, it's no guarantee that a sighting will be accepted, but at least the work will be on record, providing important and useful evidence for those reviewing Ohio's ornithological record in the future.

The Noble and Belmont County raven sightings, though unconfirmed, are striking when considered in light of the two accepted records from 1998 and 1999. Couple these sightings with the general expansion of raven populations in the eastern United States, the availability of suitable habitat, particularly in east-central and southeastern

Ohio, and a strong case can be made that sometime—maybe soon, maybe not so soon—Ohio may once again be graced by the presence of breeding common ravens. We can only hope that common ravens will be mere visitors to Ohio no more, but return to live among us forever.

Separating Common Raven and American Crow in the Field

Readers who have spent a lot of time in “raven country” might find the idea of mistaking an American crow for a common raven, or vice versa, laughable. Nonetheless, field identification of common ravens in Ohio, where crows are the ruling corvid, and common ravens extremely rare at best, requires an observer to provide a wealth of detail to support his or her sighting. Scattered throughout this article are a few “nuggets” pertaining to raven identification, and particularly to separation of common ravens from American crows. Following are a few ID tips collected from a number of experienced raven watchers. Some of the pointers repeat information mentioned in the sighting accounts above. Included as well are additional ID tips not singled out as supporting evidence in the reports submitted for Ohio’s recent raven sightings, but that are useful characteristics to look for should you encounter a wandering corvid that might be, could be, a common raven.

Size is usually the first characteristic to look for. Crows are, well, crow-sized. In contrast, at first glance a raven is going to appear very large—as large as a buteo or a vulture. To give some perspective, ravens measure approximately 20-25 percent larger than crows. Ravens average in size from 22-26”, with an average length of 24”. American crows average 16-21”, and their average length is around 18” (Rick Baetsen, pers. comm.). So, in Ohio, an observer encountering a common raven is more likely at first glance to think “hmmm...dark raptor,” rather than, “oh, wow, that’s a large crow!”

Another characteristic, a nuance that might be difficult to discern in the field unless conditions are right, is the manner in which ravens take to the air. “When ravens take flight from the ground they invariably take a step or two to get airborne. (Crows can jump directly up from the ground to become airborne, by contrast)” (David Dister, pers. comm.). Ron Pittaway of Ontario suggests that “wing-tail flicking” is a good way to separate crows from ravens in the field. It’s also useful because wing-tail flicking can be seen from a considerable distance. “Crows habitually flick their folded wings and fan their tails...one to three times, especially just after perching,” Pittaway notes, whereas ravens “occasionally slowly shuffle their wings,” a behavior that doesn’t approach the rapid wing-tail flicking of crows. Furthermore, Pittaway explains that wing-tail flicking is also found in northwestern, Tamaulipas, and fish crows, but not in common or Chihuahuan ravens. However, he warns that “the absence of [tail-wing] flicking is not completely diagnostic of ravens, but since crows do it so frequently, its absence is a strong clue” (Pittaway 1997).

In flight, the wedge-shaped tail of the raven helps separate it from the American crow. Crows’ tails, on the other hand, are fan-shaped, and not nearly so distinctly wedged as raven tails. There is also a marked difference in the manner of flight. Ravens are aerial acrobats. Pairs of ravens—both juveniles and mated adults—often engage in “sky-dancing.” Wrote Dawson in 1903: “Each spring the birds indulge in amorous antics which are decidedly *infra dig.*, turning somersaults in the air, turning to

fly on their backs, etc. Additionally, ravens soar and glide in a manner of which the average crow can only dream.” Yet another unique raven flight mannerism is “wing-tipping,” in which a raven seems to suddenly tumble out of the sky, “simultaneously tipping (or tucking in) just one wing that tilts the body to the side” (Heinrich 1999).

The raven’s voice is very distinctive, and its vocalizations more varied than the crow’s standard “caw.” Raven vocalizations tend to be hoarse-sounding calls that sound like “cronk” or “croak” or “croak” (Baetsen, pers. comm.). In other words, “Ravens croak, honk, gurgle and more, but they do not ‘caw’” (Pittaway 1997).

An observer be lucky enough to get a good, close look at a raven will note that the raven’s bill is much larger and thicker than that of the crow. Additionally, ravens have distinctly shaggy throat feathers, which stand out from the rest of the breast and upper throat, whereas the feathers on the throats of crows are smooth (Baetsen, pers. comm.).

Ravens tend to be more solitary than crows. Typical sightings, even in areas where ravens breed, are usually of just one or two birds. Jim Phillips does note that around the 4th of July, when ravens fledge, sightings of between 3 and 5 are not uncommon (Phillips, pers. comm.). Crows are more gregarious, often occurring in numbers larger than family groups. While young ravens are known to gather in social groups of various sizes in the colder months after leaving their parents, ravens as a general rule are never present in anywhere near the large numbers often encountered among crows, either in roosts or in foraging bands.³ Had the narrator of “The Raven” been visited by a crow, he’d probably have had at least a dozen others rapping at his chamber door immediately thereafter (in which case, he’d have had a murder on his hands in addition to his waking nightmare over Lenore). Instead, he was confronted by but one raven.



This common raven close-up was taken in Michigan’s Antrim County in 1994. Note the massive bill shrouded in feathers. Photo copyright © Rick Baetsen.

NOTES

¹ Bernd Heinrich has investigated the theory that ravens have adapted to feeding on roadkill, and that this has contributed to their distribution and abundance, but regards his data as inconclusive. Other researchers, Heinrich notes, note that common ravens often appear at golden eagle kills, and have been seen flushing prey for peregrine falcons, and then eating the leftovers. According to Heinrich, "the ravens and roadkill study has a long way to go... It also suggests (but does not prove) that if most raptor-kills immediately attract a raven or two, then it is because they cue in on the hunter itself, not just the dead animal." However, notes Heinrich, "roadkills are undoubtedly an important food supplement for some individual ravens" who have developed the habit of searching for them. Heinrich believes that ravens are finely attuned to the behavior of raptors and other carnivores, and that they have learned in particular to follow raptors to find food (Heinrich 1999).

² In 1999, while watching birds from his backyard, Pogacnik saw another interesting corvid flying approximately a quarter of a mile offshore over Lake Erie. Initially, he thought this bird was an eagle, but a look through a spotting scope showed it was a "corvid species," possibly a raven. Pogacnik wasn't able to see enough detail on the bird to report the sighting, but he found this particular bird interesting because, whether or not it was a common raven, he had "never seen a crow even 100 feet from the shoreline" in the eight years he'd been living along the lake (John Pogacnik, pers. comm.).

³ Jim Phillips notes what is in his experience a singular exception to the general rule that ravens don't flock in the large numbers for which crows are known. In November of 1999, Phillips was hawkwatching on Peters Mountain in West Virginia when 66 ravens flew by at the same time. "Some were harassing a golden eagle, others a red-tail. Some seemed to be playing with each other. They were all heading south" (Phillips, pers. comm.).

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Revised Ohio Checklist Available

ODNR's Division of Natural Areas and Preserves has just issued a revised Checklist of the Birds of Ohio. Produced in collaboration with the Ohio Bird Records Committee, it supplies the latest accurate information on Ohio's official list of 406 bird species. For each, it notes breeding status, native/introduced status, and the nature of the evidence verifying its occurrence (i.e., specimen, photograph, or written documentation). For each highlighted Review Species, it additionally includes the year of the species' most recent confirmed occurrence.

The initial press run of the May 1999 edition of the Checklist has been exhausted for some time. This revised edition includes a few corrections and all changes made necessary through 15 June 2000. There is no more accurate list of Ohio's avifauna. Printed on durable stock, it is more than a field checklist; it is a valuable reference that contains a wealth of information in a handy form.

A copy of the checklist is available free of charge by writing to Jim McCormac, ODNR-DNAP, 1889 Fountain Sq., Bldg F-1, Columbus, OH 43224-1331, calling (614) 265-6440, or via e-mail at jim.mccormac@dnr.state.oh.us.

Introducing Berlin Lake

by Ben Morrison

Located in Portage, Stark, and Mahoning counties in the northeast, Berlin Lake is among the best fall shorebird areas of inland Ohio. The lake, along with some 6800 surrounding acres, is owned and managed by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and offers diverse habitats which in turn make for exceptional bird and wildlife viewing in all seasons.

In 1943 Berlin Lake was formed by damming the Mahoning River. Its purpose is to control water levels downstream to protect against flooding and to insure water for navigation as far downstream as the Ohio River. At summer pool the lake's level is lowered significantly from maximum pool of 5500 acres to a surface area of 3590 acres. This change in water level creates approximately 1200 acres of mudflats. When their appearance coincides with shorebird migration, these mudflats attract large numbers and many species.

Timing is important. Water is drawn from the reservoir at a rate of approximately one foot per month from July through October or November. Nearly every year some lowering can be expected, though in a summer with above-average rainfall the reservoir will not have extensive mudflats. Given average or below-average rainfall, however, the shorebird viewing should be excellent. Because its water level does not normally fall significantly until early August, the lake does not offer many suitable areas during the early portion of the shorebird migration except in drought conditions. Typically, the first week in August here is the best time to head for the mudflats. From this time until the end of September has generally been the best period for shorebird encounters.

The mudflats begin to appear in the southwestern regions of the reservoir. When the lake first shows signs of lowering, the place to go is Greenbower Rd. (#1 on map). To get there, go 4.3 miles south from the SR 224/SR 225 intersection, then west on Greenbower Rd. for 0.8 mile. There is a parking area on the north side, just before the bridge. Walking west, observers can easily see an osprey nest northwest from the bridge, where a lone utility pole is the usual nest site. A walk further west will reveal the first of the mudflats.

Later in the year as the water recedes further, move north to Price Rd. (#2 on map), 0.8 mile north of Greenbower. From SR 225 turn west on Price Rd. and go 0.3 mile to a parking area on the right. After scanning the area north of the parking lot, walk back to the bridge and look south over the mudflats. Notice the numerous cliff swallows nesting beneath the bridge. Shorebirds may be seen from the bridge, but more than likely good looks will require a hike along the west shoreline south of the bridge. This walk can be as long as a mile and a half, to a point where you can see the dam at Deer Creek Reservoir.

The next viewing area is near the SR 225 bridge (#3 on map), and located 0.6 mile north of Price Rd. The mudflats lie west of the bridge, so morning viewing is recommended. The bridge itself offers a good vantage point, but hiking the south shore will get you closer, with the sun at the proper angle for optimal viewing. By hiking one can also see an area not visible from the bridge. Over the years, the east side of the SR 225 bridge has been one of the lake's most productive areas, either because of its sheer size or perhaps simply the timing of draw-downs. This area does not usually feature extensive mudflats until the end of August or early September. For best viewing, park on the north end of the bridge and walk back south to where the northeast shoreline is accessible. It is almost a necessity to walk out onto the extensive mudflats, but the hike is well worth it. When the lake is at its lowest one can walk for at least two miles along the northeast shoreline, scanning hundreds of acres of prime shorebird habitat. This area has had marbled godwits and Baird's, white-rumped, stilt, western, and buff-breasted sandpipers, as well as many others.

Another way to reach this area is from German Church Rd. (#4 on map). Go 0.4 mile north from the SR 225 bridge and east on German Church Rd. proceeding 0.5 mile to a parking area on the left. From the parking lot walk south across German Church Rd. to a point overlooking the reservoir. This overlook provides an excellent view of an area behind the island that cannot be seen from the SR 225 bridge. From here the shoreline can be walked going northeast late in the season.

Another good location is along Willow Creek (#6 on map). This area is found by going 2.6 miles north of the SR 225 bridge, then east at the Berlin Lake sign for 1.0 mile to the parking area. Willow Creek runs north of the parking lot. The high embankment at the margin of the parking lot provides a good vantage point for scanning the mudflats and creek bed below. This stop is ideal for those not wanting to walk far. Another good area for viewing without much hiking can be found at the bridge on SR 14 (#9 on map) 1.0 mile south of the SR 224/SR 14 junction.

An area worthy of mention is the old railroad trestle (#12 on map). Although the property is privately owned at this time and cannot be accessed by the public, it is included here because the US Army Corps of Engineers is pursuing purchasing the land, and with luck it will be opened to the public in the near future. The trestle bisects the lake at one of its widest points, creating a lot of potential for finding many types of birds.

Table 1 presents a compilation of shorebirds seen over the last nine years. Two additional species seen in the vicinity are not included in the table. These birds—whimbrel and willet—were seen at Walborn Reservoir, which lies 3.8 miles west of Berlin Reservoir on Price Rd.

When looking for shorebirds in this area, please remember to be cautious walking the mudflats. The consistency of the mud can really be hard to judge. As a rule, stay on the dry-looking areas. It is also prudent to go with a friend if at all possible, especially in the remote areas. Finally, remember much of the area surrounding the reservoir is public hunting land, so be mindful of the hunting seasons.

Other Birding Opportunities Nearby and at Other Seasons

Springtime can also be rewarding at Berlin Lake. The open water attracts many waterfowl, and large tracts of fields and forest nearby make for tremendous passerine watching. The German Church area (#4 on map) has been productive for migrating as well as resident species. The area north of the parking lot has fallow fields with fencerows and thickets of viburnum and crabapple. Mowed paths make this area easily accessible.

Another location is found 0.4 mile north of German Church Rd. on SR 225. Turn into a parking area just north of high-tension power line (#5 on map). Another osprey nest is nearby: follow the trail east beside a grassy wetland to the first impoundment, where the nest sits atop a tower. One can usually find several red-headed woodpeckers year-round in this spot. The trail continues through fields and second-growth woods to another impoundment.

The Willow Creek road (#6 on map) is probably the most magnificent area of Berlin Lake. The trail begins at the east end of the parking area and continues east onto a peninsula. For the first half-mile the fallow fields and shrubbery make for good sparrow and warbler habitat. The road winds through a beautiful beech-maple forest ringing with songs of warblers, thrushes, tanagers, and many other species in season. The trail continues for about a mile to the end of the peninsula.

Another area along Willow Creek lies north of SR 224 (#7 on map). Located 1.5 miles east of the SR 224/SR 225 junction, it is best approached by walking 0.2 mile east of

Table 1. Shorebird species encountered at Berlin Lake, Ohio from 1991-1999.

Species	Max #: Date	# of Years (of 9)	Early Arrival Date	Departure Date
Semipalmated Plover	27 (9/4/1997)	9	7/18/1991	10/16/1994
American Golden-Plover	22 (9/24/1994)	5	8/21/1999	10/16/1994
Black-bellied Plover	12 (10/4/1998)	5	8/24/1999	10/19/1998
Killdeer	502 (8/13/1999)	9	*	11/7/1998
American Avocet	1 (9/22/1994)	1	9/22/1994	10/9/1994
Greater Yellowlegs	32 (9/26/1997)	9	8/8/1999	10/19/1998
Lesser Yellowlegs	500+ (9/19/1997)	9	7/11/1991	10/12/1997
Solitary Sandpiper	45 (7/22/1999)	9	6/29/1991	9/26/1994
Spotted Sandpiper	41 (8/8/1999)	9	*	9/26/1994
Hudsonian Godwit	16 (8/19/1999)	1	8/19/1999	8/19/1999
Marbled Godwit	1 (9/18/1999)	1	9/18/1999	9/21/1999
Ruddy Turnstone	12 (9/26/1994)	1	9/26/1994	9/26/1994
Sanderling	8 (9/24/1994)	5	8/13/1999	10/9/1994
Semipalmated Sandpiper	60 (8/29/1999)	6	7/9/1991	9/26/1994
Western Sandpiper	1 (8/23/1995)	3	8/23/1999	9/26/1997
Least Sandpiper	200+ (7/11/1992)	9	6/29/1991	10/19/1998
White-rumped Sandpiper	27 (9/15/1999)	3	8/14/1997	10/8/1995
Baird's Sandpiper	5 (9/26/1997)	3	8/21/1999	10/8/1995
Pectoral Sandpiper	147 (8/7/1991)	9	7/9/1991	11/7/1998
Dunlin	34 (11/7/1998)	2	9/18/1994	11/7/1998
Stilt Sandpiper	40 (9/19/1997)	5	7/31/1999	10/8/1995
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	3 (9/7/1999)	2	9/1/1999	9/21/1997
Short-billed Dowitcher	8 (8/13/1999)	5	8/3/1999	9/22/1996
Long-billed Dowitcher	2 (9/24/1995)	3	8/29/1999	10/6/1996
Common Snipe	10 (9/26/1998)	9	7/5/1992	10/12/1997
American Woodcock	10+*	9	*	—
Wilson's Phalarope	1 (8/18/1997)	1	8/18/1997	8/18/1997
Red-necked Phalarope	1 (9/6/1997)	3	9/6/1997	9/18/1999

* Nesting Species

the parking area to an oil well road. In this area several interesting warbler species have been noted nesting and during migration. Golden-winged warblers have been seen here from time to time.

The SR 224 bridge (#9 on map) crosses the reservoir 2.5 miles east of the Deerfield circle. This site provides an excellent view of large expanses of the lake. Gulls, terns, waterfowl, and occasional bald eagles can be seen here. Nearly a hundred pairs of cliff swallows use the bridge as a nest site.

The dam and the gorge downstream (#8 on map) are worth checking. The dam is a good vantage point to see the deepest portion of the lake. Here in late winter and early spring loons, grebes, and diving ducks can be seen. Below the dam is a deep gorge with native hemlocks along its flanks. This Canadian type of habitat provides potential for nesting northern species. To get to the dam go 1.0 mile west of the SR 224 bridge to Bonner Rd., then north 1.0 mile to the Berlin Lake Dam sign. The parking area is 0.6 mile further.

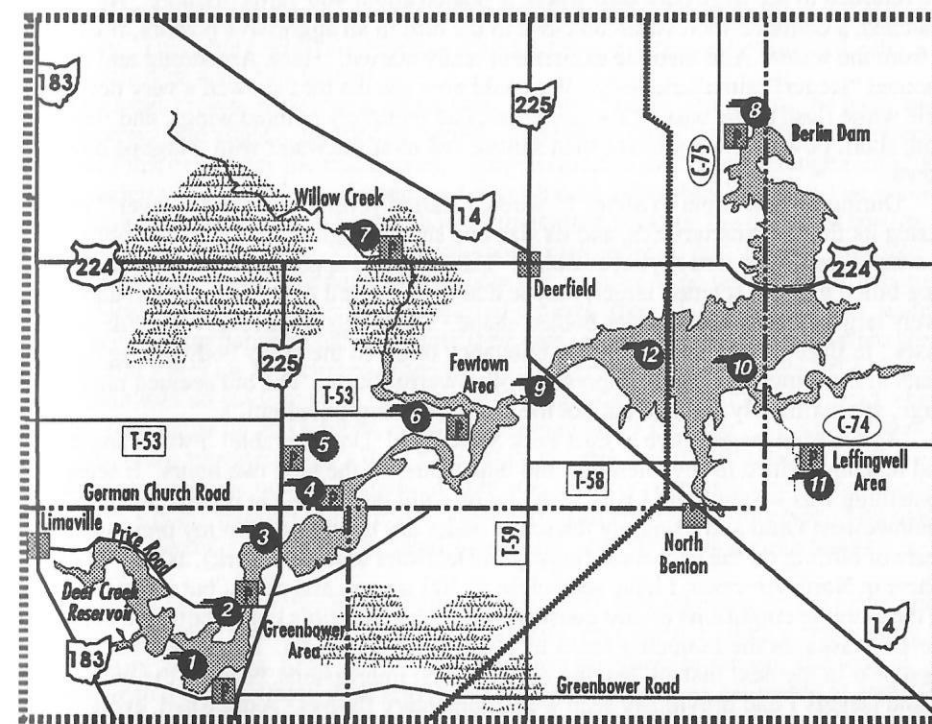
The Mill Creek Campground (#10 on map) on Bedell Rd. is a wonderful place to camp, and offers many birding opportunities. It features mature trees, open spaces, and an overlook of the reservoir. To get to the campground go east of the SR 224 bridge for 0.7 mile, then south 0.5 mile on Bedell Rd. The Resource Manager's office and Visitors' center are on the right hand, just north of the campground. There, maps and information are

provided, and the staff will be glad to answer any questions you may have about the area. The Corp of Engineers' Resource Manager's Office can be reached at 330-547-3781, or on the Web at <http://www.lrp.usace.army.mil/rec/lakes/berlin.htm>. The postal address is Berlin Lake Resource Manager, 7400 Bedell Rd., Berlin Center, OH 44401-9707.

The Leffingwell Wildlife Area, located southeast of the reservoir, is a large tract of land managed by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. This area is quite diverse, ranging from open grassland to deciduous hardwood forest. This array of habitats supplies the ingredients for quite a number of nesting as well as migratory bird species. To get to this area turn south off SR 224 onto Bedell Rd. and proceed 1.5 miles to Leffingwell Rd. and turn east. Continue east for 0.2 mile to a parking area on the south side of the road. A trail begins at the south side of the parking lot.

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I wish to thank Craig Holt, Bob and Denise Lane, and Kent Miller for supplying records and observations that made this article possible. Also, thanks to Larry Rosche for supplying the map on short notice, and to Bob and Denise Lane for showing me the good spots. And thanks to Barbara Gill and Jason Quinn, Park Rangers and Naturalists for the Army Corp of Engineers, for taking me on a guided tour. All of their contributions are appreciated.



Map of Berlin Lake. Numbers correspond to locations mentioned in the accompanying article. Map produced by Larry Rosche.

Pomarine Jaeger at East Fork State Park

by Jay G. Lehman

How to disrupt a Cincinnati Bird Club field trip? Find a great bird, and in particular, the third verified inland record for the state (v. *The Ohio Cardinal* 23:12), and reputedly the first verified record for southwestern Ohio.

30 October 1999 started like a typical fall day. The temperature was in the 50s, the sky clear to partly cloudy, and the last few leaves were still quite colorful. Those of us who went with leader Hank Armstrong on the day's field trip to East Fork State Park expected to see migratory waterfowl and some gulls—early, before the fishermen chased everything away—and the usual fall migrant land birds. None of us could forget, however, that East Fork had been famous recently for rarities, due to Hank's good fieldwork and constant vigilance. Little did we suspect what awaited us!

When I arrived at South Beach just before 8:30 a.m., everyone was lined up on the beach, scanning the lake to the north. The rising sun was just cresting the tree-line on the hills to the east, and the light was not yet good for viewing distant birds on the water. There was casual mention of a "large, dark, waterfowl-type bird" off to our left, which seemed to be hunkered down and usually facing away. We delayed trying to identify this bird because it was not in the sun's direct light. About thirty minutes later when the light was better and after we had scanned through the waterfowl and gulls, we returned to the large dark bird where it floated about 400 yards offshore. As we watched, a common loon swam up close to the bird in an aggressive posture, flushing it from the water. And then the excitement really started! Hank Armstrong and I shouted "jaeger!" simultaneously. We could now see the bird showed a very noticeable white flash at the base of the primaries, had relatively pointed wings, and flew with short, powerful wing-beats, then sailing low over the water with wingtips bowed down.

During its first flight of about 75 yards, I started yelling "pomarine jaeger!" recognizing its flight characteristics, and its size and shape. Excited, I was totally oblivious to what anyone else was saying or doing. This bird was approximately the size of a ring-billed gull but seemed larger, maybe due to its overall dark brown color, and relatively larger-headed and heavier-bodied shape. The wings were relatively wide at their bases. In flight, there was little to no buoyancy or lift to the bulky body during downbeats of the wings, giving an impression of powerful flight. The bill seemed rather large, approximately the size but not the shape of a ring-billed gull's.

A pomarine jaeger, here at East Fork State Park! Unbelievable! I was transfixed, and remained glued to my telescope and binoculars for the next two hours. It seemed something was wrong: here I was, standing on solid ground in the relative warmth of southwestern Ohio and using my telescope under dry conditions! In my previous 27 years of birding on the east coast (mostly in Delaware and New York), as well as elsewhere in North America, I have seen close to 500 jaegers and skuas, but almost always in the extreme conditions of east coast storms, Lake Ontario's cold fronts, the cold and wet of Alaska, or the bouncing decks of offshore birding boats. I expected this bird to disappear in the next instant, leaving only our first impressions, because the only inland jaegers I had previously seen were momentary fly-bys. Astonished, excited, even transfixed, and focused on the bird as we were, I do nonetheless remember that Hank and I ran to our cars for reference texts, then debated the relative merits of the identification of the bird as a pomarine jaeger.

Later, when a fisherman grounded his boat at the beach, Hank tried to convince me to negotiate a trip out to the bird, but I remained glued to my telescope. Eventually Bobby Foppe persuaded the fisherman to take Hank and me out to the bird. The fisherman brought us within 150 to 200 feet, whereupon Hank took some distant photographs while I studied the bird at 15-20X with a hand-held Swift Zoom telescope on a homemade gunstock. From the boat, viewing conditions were excellent. The sun was up, there were few if any clouds, and the light came from behind us. These conditions allowed observations of more details. Later, determined to see additional field marks after consulting other references, I returned to South Beach on 31 October 1999 from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m., where along with many other local area birders was able to view the bird under excellent and brightly back-lit conditions.

Unfortunately, the blown-up photograph shown in this article is not very distinct, but a sketch made by the author from the photograph is included to show proportions and plumage contrasts. Approximate dimensions of the bird on the sketch were compared to measurements from the photograph in an attempt to ensure accuracy.

Description

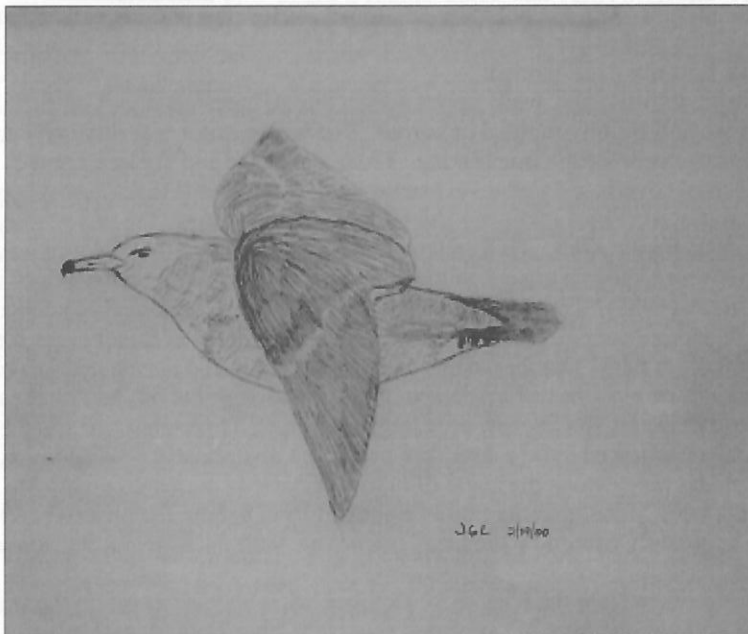
For general description and flight characteristics see discussion above. Generally, the wing-beats were short, powerful strokes, imparting little buoyancy to the flight. Sometimes when the bird took flight in pursuit of gulls, the wing-beats were rather deep, as if "digging deep to grab more air" to get started, but without causing much buoyancy. This impression is consistent with a relatively large, powerful bird, and, indeed, this bird was "full-bellied."

The head, crown, nape, back, upper wings, throat, breast, and part of the belly appeared brown and slightly mottled or barred. The brown color was relatively dark and quite uniform except for the fine barring. From a distance and at close range (150-200 ft) the undertail coverts showed wide barring with dark color (blackish-gray) on white, and there appeared to be a relatively sharp demarcation between the undertail coverts and the barring on the sides. This undertail color may indicate that the bird was older than its first year, whose plumage would show less distinct or no demarcation, according to Harrison (1983). The rump or uppertail coverts, seen well on 31 October, were brown with darker barring. Double white crescents on the outer underwings were seen well several times on 31 October, when the wings were raised during take-off or landing. There was no evidence of a pale spot at the junction of the bill and forehead when seen at close range on 30 October, or at longer range on 31 October. At some angles and light, there appeared to be a dark face patch, but this was due to shadows and disappeared at any range when the angle of light was directly perpendicular to the length of the bird's body, parallel to the line of sight and from behind the observer. The shadows were apparently caused by the head's structure, with the brow jutting above a recessed eye.

At closer range from the boat on 30 October, when the jaeger sat on the water and also while in flight, the bird still appeared relatively large-headed, with a bulky body. The bill was large, long, relatively thick, of uniform thickness to the tip, and gray at the base with a contrastingly dark gray-black tip. Bill length was estimated at approximately two-thirds the width of the head. The bill tip featured a rather large hook and a very noticeable sharp angle (gonys) near the end of the lower mandible. This structure of the bill tip was visible to this observer only at close range from the boat by tele-



Bumming a boat ride from fishermen, Hank Armstrong was able to photograph this pomarine jaeger at East Fork State Park, Clermont Co., on 30 October 1999.



To aid viewing of the pomarine jaeger photograph, Jay G. Lehman sketched the bird from that photograph to show details such as proportions and plumage contrasts. This sketch was originally published in *The Passenger Pigeon* in March 2000.

scope. From a greater distance, the bill tip was frequently not visible due to its darker color, making the bill appear shorter.

When chasing ring-billed gulls, the jaeger appeared approximately the same size, no smaller, and the bill was approximately the same size, in direct comparison. In this comparison, the jaeger appeared relatively larger-bodied and wider at the bases of its wings. In flight, the width of the wings where they joined the body was approximately equal to the length of the tail. Elongated central tail feathers were barely, if at all, noticeable to this observer, from several angles when the bird was in flight, even when the tail was spread during banking. Others who observed this bird reported elongated central tail feathers. To this observer, the central tail feathers were indeed longer than the outer tail feathers, as expected for the somewhat pointed tail of a jaeger, but only once was there a slight impression to this observer of elongation of the central tail feathers, and there was no evidence of pointed central feathers. When the bird was sitting on the water, the tail was noticeably shorter than the wingtips.

Identification

The combination of the above characteristics is consistent with pomarine jaeger but eliminates parasitic and long-tailed jaegers. This was an immature individual, possibly older than a first-year bird.

Even though there are overlapping characteristics among all North American jaegers and, particularly, pomarine and parasitic jaegers, this bird's size, shape, flight characteristics, and bill size eventually eliminated parasitic jaeger. First of all, the bird's body and bill were too small for skua—an even more unlikely occurrence—and the bird was too bulky, large, and long-billed to be a long-tailed jaeger. A typical long-tailed jaeger in flight would be much more tern-like. While the long-tailed jaeger's bill might be as thick, it would be very much shorter. A distant slide photo of long-tailed in flight (personal collection from Alaska) confirms the much smaller body size of a typical individual of this species in comparison to the East Fork bird. Another slide photo from Alaska of a sitting long-tailed jaeger confirms the thickness and the shortness of the bill relative to the East Fork bird.

The initial identification as pomarine and not parasitic jaeger was based upon flight characteristics and size and shape (jizz). Pomarine jaeger is more the size and shape in the air of ring-billed gull, while parasitic jaeger is more the size and shape in the air of laughing gull. The bill of pomarine jaeger is heavier and more the size of that of ring-billed gull, while the bill of parasitic jaeger is thinner and more the size of laughing gull's bill. I use these species as reference because prior to 1994, when I moved to Ohio, my birding experience had been primarily from the east coast, so I am very acquainted with both these gulls. The barring on the head, nape, and face rather than streaking around the head and side of face, the double white crescent under the wing rather than a single white crescent, and the lack of a light spot between the bill-base and the forehead indicate that this bird was a pomarine jaeger and not a parasitic jaeger. These are among the field marks indicated in the article in *Birding* (1997) on jaeger species in the region. The tail, excluding any elongated central feathers, was too short and about the same length as the wing width, which is consistent with pomarine and not parasitic jaeger. Parasitic jaeger would appear to have a longer tail even without the central tail feather extension, and narrower wings at their bases.

Behavior

The “hunkered-down” posture seen initially may be a characteristic behavior of jaegers to hide from passing gulls. At least once, this jaeger seemed to use this posture as a way to surprise gulls and ambush them. This jaeger was observed chasing ring-billed gulls several times on 30 and 31 October. This bird was “one tough dude,” (Hank Armstrong), chasing the gulls, getting right on their tails until they dropped or disgorged food, whereupon the jaeger wheeled and dropped to the water to eat the booty. As Armstrong further elaborated in his report to the OBRC, “This bird didn’t hesitate a moment in its attack on any gull that had food in its possession. Swift and powerful flight in its attacks. In over six hours of observation, I saw it only once retrieve a small fish from the surface of the lake that had not been dropped by another bird.” During its stay at East Fork SP, the pomarine jaeger spent most of its time in the general vicinity of South Beach and the saddle dam. This area is typically used as a lounging, loafing, and staging area for the wintering resident flocks of gulls.

Epilogue

The East Fork pomarine jaeger was also seen by the Cincinnati Bird Club field trip leader and attendees on 30 October 1999: Hank (leader) and Lynette Armstrong, Erick Heineke, Doug Wallace, Bobby Foppe, Mark Morgan, and Thomas and Donna Hull; many of these observers returned on 31 October 1999. Local birders Dave Styer, David A. Brinkman, Neill Cade, Ned Keller, Frank Renfrow, Darlena Graham, Norm Walker, Jeff Hayes, and Bill Stanley independently identified this bird. In addition, a number of birders from outside the area came to East Fork SP to observe the jaeger. Doug Overacker led a group of five birders from Dayton on 14 November 1999 and observed the jaeger for over an hour. A birder from Pennsylvania stopped at the park office, asked for directions to the area where the bird was being seen, and observed the bird that day. Two birders from Indiana also observed the bird after asking directions to the area from park manager Charlie Clark. The bird was last seen by Hank Armstrong on 15 November 1999. This record has been accepted by the Ohio Bird Records Committee, based upon documentation submitted by David A. Brinkman, Hank Armstrong, and the author (J. G. Lehman).

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Book Review

Harry Church Oberholser. 1999. *When Passenger Pigeons Flew in the Killbuck Valley: The Birds of Wayne County, Ohio, 1896*. Kurt Knebusch, ed. Introduction by Bruce Glick, with a checklist of Wayne and Holmes counties by Dennis Kline. The Wooster Book Company and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, Wooster. 158 pp, ill. Paper, \$8.95. ISBN#1888683961.

The career of Harry Church Oberholser (1870-1963) as an ornithologist was long and prolific. His best-known published works are monumental monographs describing the avifauna of Texas (posthumous, 1974) and Louisiana (1938). A classifier and accumulator of objects by temperament, he obsessively collected specimens in the US and data on birds brought back by explorers from far-flung climes in every continent. He is regarded as one of the foremost “splitters,” painstakingly describing plumages and morphology among discriminable forms, ultimately naming 560 species and subspecies. In 1939 Phillips named the dusky flycatcher *Empidonax oberholseri* in his honor.

Oberholser’s tenure with the US Bureau of Biological Survey (later the US Fish & Wildlife Service) began in 1895 and lasted until 1941, when he assumed the office of curator of ornithology for the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. He died in Cleveland on Christmas day in 1963. His early career involved the state of Ohio as well, as the twenty year-old Oberholser, while clerking at his father’s dry-goods store in Wooster after having left Columbia University without a degree, began in 1890 to compile an annotated list from four years of observation of birds in Wayne County. The work had been commissioned by the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station (now OSU’s Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center) in Wooster, and the fruits of his labors appeared as *A Preliminary List of the Birds of Wayne County* in 1896. This was Oberholser’s first publication in a career that was to produce nearly 900 scientific papers.

When Passengers Flew in the Killbuck Valley resurrects this publication, original copies of which are pretty scarce these days. Kurt Knebusch of the OARDC edits it for readers of today (adding modern nomenclature and taxonomic order), Bruce Glick introduces the text, and Dennis Kline appends a very useful modern-day checklist of Holmes and Wayne County birds. It appears from The Wooster Book Company, a Wayne County publisher whose future plans include a second edition of Peterjohn’s *The Birds of Ohio*, scheduled for release this fall.

The word “Preliminary” in the title is more than an instance of standard scientific modesty. Oberholser apologizes early for his sketchy data—he reports only 183 species in all—citing the study’s short duration and the demands of “an active business life.” Oberholser, though an observer of birds since his boyhood, had not grown up in Wayne County, and his career as a specialist—where he distinguished himself in museum work—had yet to begin. Unsurprisingly, the commoner species are more fully treated. The American robin receives the lengthiest account, whereas many less familiar species are pretty much given a lick and a promise, even in the case of the passenger pigeon of the new title, which appears and disappears in three sentences. Lack of time and opportunity, rather than any matters of actual occurrence, seems to explain

the presence of many birds on Oberholser's list of 74 hypothetical species: examples include gadwall, ring-necked duck, semipalmated plover, least sandpiper, black tern, blue-headed vireo, bank swallow, American pipit, palm warbler, and northern waterthrush. These species, some of which we must feel any active birder would have observed, are listed as "hypothetical" because unconfirmed by specimens. In his day, only a specimen could verify a species' status, and Oberholser was a tireless collector and probably a good shot. Of the 723 Ohio specimens in the University of Michigan's bird collections, for example, fully 154 were donated by Oberholser between 1890 and 1894, and bear the famous "HCO" as well as Wayne county locations on their tags.

Oberholser's work in Wayne County must have soon led him to join the Bureau of Biological Survey as an ornithological clerk. While there he attained degrees through the doctoral level at George Washington University by 1916. This first work on birds attests to his scrupulous devotion to verifiable evidence as well as to his familiarity with the existing ornithological literature. Occasional anecdotes enliven the annotations, and the young observer seems unafraid to contradict his elders when he has supporting evidence. Only occasionally—as in his annotations to the nominate subspecies of horned lark—does his later interest in taxonomy emerge.

His account of Wayne County birdlife a hundred years ago sometimes surprises us with how much things have changed, and sometimes with how little. Oberholser regards turkey vultures as rare summer visitors, and the red-shouldered hawk as the most common raptor. He notes but a single nesting record for the mallard, and regards the black-billed cuckoo, Virginia rail, and sora as unverified as nesters. On the other hand, the house sparrow's more obnoxious nesting habits are noted, as is the common grackle's willingness to roost in larger towns. The work's more elaborate detail in some annotations—as in describing the nests of swallows and swifts—is lacking in others where it would have been at least as interesting. Oberholser's introductory chapter, "The Nature of the Land," presents a Wayne County largely recognizable today, and where certain natural features have regrettably since disappeared he often has noticed the first symptoms of their obliterations.

Overall the work is just old enough to charm in illuminating an earlier time, and recent enough to reflect our experience in the present day. Kline's checklist makes clear subsequent changes in the avifauna, as it underlines some of the inadequacies of the young ornithologist's version. The book lacks an index, but readers familiar with standard taxonomic order really won't need one. The back cover features an antique map of the county. As for errors, there are a couple in modern names for birds, so trifling that very few readers will even notice them. Birders in this region of Ohio will certainly want to have it, as will collectors of Ohio bird books and admirers of Oberholser's work. The book is well-produced and attractively priced, and will reward any student of Ohio birds. *Bill Whan*

Recent Actions of the Ohio Bird Records Committee

The Ohio Bird Records Committee exists to increase knowledge of Ohio's birdlife by validating records, maintaining for the public archival records of occurrences of rare birds in the state, and establishing the official list of Ohio bird species. The OBRC relies vitally upon help from Ohio's field birders who send in details of their sightings of rare birds. The Committee establishes the Review List (see below), which includes all species encountered infrequently enough in Ohio as to require documentation (specimen, photo, sound recording, or full written description) for their inclusion in the official record. *The Ohio Cardinal*, as a journal of record, will not treat reports of Review List species as established until accepted by the OBRC, and hence will not usually publish reports of species not supported by documentation submitted to the OBRC.

The OBRC does not review sightings, of course, only documentations of sightings. The Committee cannot decide if a given species was seen, but only if documentation from those present at the sighting verifies, for the historical record, the species' occurrence at the time. All documentations, with Committee actions thereon, are archived for future researchers. All these records—with the exception of the identities of Committee members on vote sheets—are available to the public. We offer here, as a general rule, only brief summaries of OBRC actions, details of which are available from Jim McCormac, Secretary of the OBRC, upon request. We are grateful to him for supplying information for this report.

ACCEPTED RECORDS: Documentations received from the observers specified for the following records were judged sufficient to verify them by at least nine of the eleven members of the Committee.

Western Grebe—Richland County, 15-18 January 1999, observers J. Herman, E.

Pierce, K. Metcalf

Ross's Goose—Ottawa County, 29 January 2000, observers R. Harlan, S. Wagner

Ross's Goose—Mercer County, 1 April 2000, observer D. Dister

Yellow Rail—Pickaway County, 11 April 2000, observer J. McCormac

Bohemian Waxwing—Cuyahoga County, 12 December 1999, observer K. Metcalf

Le Conte's Sparrow—Cuyahoga County, 28-30 October 1998, observer S. Zadar

Le Conte's Sparrow—Erie County, 3 October 1999, observer S. Zadar

Harris's Sparrow—Holmes County, 9 January 2000, observer J. Beechy

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED: Documentations received for the following reports received fewer than six votes to accept, and were hence not accepted.

Parasitic Jaeger—Lake County, September 1999

Long-tailed Jaeger—Lake County, October 1999

Jaeger sp.—Clark County, December 1999

Glaucous-winged Gull—Cuyahoga County, February 1989

Eurasian Collared-Dove—Washington County, March 2000

Common Nighthawk—Hamilton County, February 2000

Black Rosy-Finch—Ashtabula County, April 1971 [accepted as rosy-finch sp.]

Two of these decisions (glaucous-winged gull and black rosy-finch) require some background information, at least in view of the unusual dates involved. The glaucous-winged gull record's documentation consisted entirely of two photographs taken in Cleveland in February of 1989. These photos are currently still posted on the Internet at <<http://www.aves.net/birds-of-ohio/xthayer1.jpg>> and <<http://www.aves.net/birds-of-ohio/xthayer3.jpg>> for readers to examine, courtesy of the photographer. He, understandably enough, could not offer additional written documentation more than ten years after the occasion, and had not considered the bird a possible glaucous-winged at the time. The photos were called to the Committee's attention, in fact, by a discussion of the images on the IDFrontiers discussion group on the Internet. A full set of recirculations, with additional discussions at the annual meeting of the OBRC in 2000, resulted in the non-acceptance of the record, the overall opinion being that while the images were certainly suggestive, certain unclear features, the possibility of hybrid origin, and the lack of accompanying written documentation presented insurmountable problems for a first state record.

The black rosy-finch documentation was based on sightings at a Conneaut backyard feeder on 5-6 April 1971, and has been preserved. At the time of the sightings, three *Leucosticte* finches were recognized by the American Ornithologists' Union: gray-crowned rosy-finch, black rosy-finch, and brown rosy-finch. The 6th Edition of *The AOU Check-list of North American Birds* (1983), in what was later acknowledged as an error, lumped the three forms as *Leucosticte arctoa*, with the English name "rosy finch." Peterjohn in *The Birds of Ohio* (1989) treats the record as accepted, saying "Detailed descriptions...indicated that this individual was of the 'Black' race." In 1993 the AOU restored the three *Leucosticte* species, a decision based at least in part on part on the fact that no article justifying the 1983 lumping had appeared in a recognized scientific publication. In early 1996, therefore, the documentation was recirculated by the OBRC, this time as "black rosy-finch" *L. atrata*. Expert advice was sought and received, a recirculation was conducted, and the documentation was not accepted as verifying the species for circulations in 1996 and 1997, though the record was accepted as "rosy-finch species." Unfortunately, the archives did not contain complete voting records, so the record was circulated a final time in 2000, with the identical result.

THE OHIO REVIEW LIST: This is a list of bird species sufficiently rare as to require documentation (complete written details, diagnostic photo or sound recordings, or specimen) satisfactory to the OBRC in order to enter the official Ohio records. It includes: any species with no accepted record for Ohio; any recorded species for which the known frequency of occurrence is no greater than two individuals per year over the past ten years; and any recorded species for which the known frequency is greater than two, but less than three, records per year over the past ten years, as determined by a vote of the OBRC. This list is continually revised; while no species have been removed from the Review List since its last publication here, the common ground-dove has been added as a specified species based on an accepted record since that time.

The Review List consists of the following species, plus any species not yet recorded in Ohio:

Pacific Loon	Long-billed Curlew	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
Western Grebe	Red-necked Stint	Black-billed Magpie
Black-capped Petrel	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	Common Raven
Leach's Storm-Petrel	Curlew Sandpiper	Violet-green Swallow
Northern Gannet	Ruff	Boreal Chickadee
Brown Pelican	Eurasian Woodcock	Rock Wren
Anhinga	Parasitic Jaeger	Bewick's Wren
Magnificent Frigatebird	Long-tailed Jaeger	Northern Wheatear
Tricolored Heron	Black-headed Gull	Mountain Bluebird
White Ibis	Heermann's Gull	Townsend's Solitaire
Glossy Ibis	Mew Gull	Varied Thrush
White-faced Ibis	California Gull	Sprague's Pipit
Roseate Spoonbill	Ross's Gull	Bohemian Waxwing
Wood Stork	Ivory Gull	Black-throated Gray
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	Royal Tern	Warbler
Ross's Goose	Arctic Tern	Townsend's Warbler
Cinnamon Teal	Least Tern	Kirtland's Warbler
Tufted Duck	Large-billed Tern	Swainson's Warbler
King Eider	Thick-billed Murre	Painted Redstart
Common Eider	Black Guillemot	Western Tanager
Barrow's Goldeneye	Long-billed Murrelet	Green-tailed Towhee
Swallow-tailed Kite	Ancient Murrelet	Spotted Towhee
Mississippi Kite	Atlantic Puffin	Bachman's Sparrow
Harris's Hawk	Common Ground-Dove	Black-throated Sparrow
Swainson's Hawk	Smooth-billed Ani	Lark Bunting
Gyr Falcon	Groove-billed Ani	Baird's Sparrow
Prairie Falcon	Northern Hawk Owl	Le Conte's Sparrow
Yellow Rail	Burrowing Owl	Harris's Sparrow
Black Rail	Great Gray Owl	Smith's Longspur
Purple Gallinule	Boreal Owl	Black-headed Grosbeak
Northern Lapwing	Rufous Hummingbird	Painted Bunting
Snowy Plover	Red-cockaded Woodpecker	Great-tailed Grackle
Wilson's Plover	Black-backed Woodpecker	Bullock's Oriole
Piping Plover	Gray Flycatcher	Brambling
Black-necked Stilt	Say's Phoebe	Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch
Spotted Redshank	Vermilion Flycatcher	Pine Grosbeak
Eskimo Curlew	Western Kingbird	Hoary Redpoll

Bill Whan

The CARDINAL



Retrospective: 20 Years Ago in the Cardinal

With little to report from the twelve-page Winter 1979-80 issue of *The Ohio Cardinal*, we omitted a retrospective in our previous issue (Vol. 23, No. 2). Here we review a few highlights from that season and then carry on with the Spring issue for 1980 (Vol. 3, No. 1).

The Winter 1979-80 season, mundane overall, was nevertheless blessed with a few good birds, one of them a first state record. Two king eiders and a gyrfalcon were found in December, as were additional rewards for lakewatchers: six Iceland, 28+ glaucous, three lesser black-backed, and no fewer

than four black-headed gulls during the period. The bird of the season put in an appearance at Lorain from 12-18 February in the form of Ohio's first Heermann's gull. Further inland, the second and third state records of varied thrush were excellent winter finds at Findley SP and in Mansfield.

The issue for Spring of 1980 was considerably more generous than its predecessor. Tom Bartlett and Ed Pierce shared the editorial duties, fifty reporters contributed data, and two articles, a birdfinding guide to two sites, a spring hawk flight report, and two reproduced documentations were included in its 32 pages.

Bruce Peterjohn provided "Identification Aid: Short-billed vs. Long-billed Dowitcher", with advice especially needed at the time, and Laurel Van Camp chronicled bald eagle nesting success in Ohio from 1975-1980. Looking ahead to the upcoming season, Larry Rosche and Tom Bartlett described Adams County and Irwin Prairie as summer trip destinations, complete with maps. John Pogacnik's spring hawk flight report detailed the numbers of species and individuals recorded each day at Lorain and Crane Creek sites: while nothing rare was noticed, a respectable 4074 individuals of 14 species were recorded.

Spring of 1980 was a very good season for rarities. Several pages would be necessary to recount them all, so only the outstanding finds of the period are reported here. Two *Plegadis* ibises were observed at Crane Creek for a week during May, but unfortunately "no one could get close enough to identify them..." Vic Fazio and Kyle Jones documented Ohio's third cinnamon teal from 11 May at Magee Marsh for the magazine. Another first state record was observed by many at Lorain from 3-14 March. Details from John Pogacnik on this male tufted duck, still Ohio's only accepted record, were reproduced in this issue. Running a little late, a king eider dropped into Bay View on 6 April, and a female harlequin duck did likewise on 2 May at Lorain.

Rallids made a remarkable showing, with two yellow rails (one staying for several days at Irwin Prairie), two black rails, and two purple gallinules. Larids were fairly impressive as well, with lingering glaucous and Iceland gulls, two laughing gulls, two Franklin's gulls, two little gulls, scads of black terns, and the return of the Heermann's gull to Lorain on 3-12 March. The two varied thrushes mentioned above remained until 12 March in Mansfield and 22 March at Findley SP. A black-throated gray warbler was reported in Lorain on 20 April, and a female Kirtland's warbler was captured and banded on 21 May at Crane Creek (see report from this spring earlier in this issue, the first banding of the species since 1980). A Le Conte's sparrow, unusual in spring, was reported on 11 May at Ottawa NWR. Finally, on the exotic side, a ringed turtle-dove took up nesting with a mourning dove in the Dayton area from 11 March through the end of the period. *Joseph W. Hammond*

A Bonanza of Gulls!



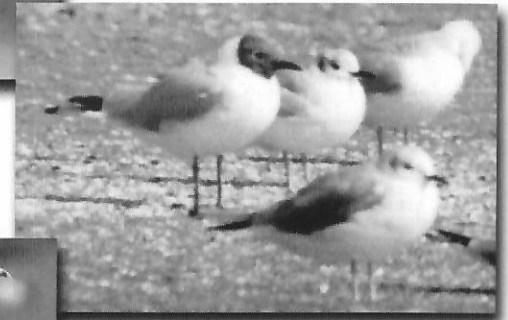
Laughing Gull - Caesar Creek State Park, Warren Co., 15 May 2000. Photo by Tom Uhlman.

Franklin's Gull - Caesar Creek State Park, Warren Co., 15 May 2000. Photo by Bob Royse.



Little Gull - Conneaut Harbor, Ashtabula Co., March 2000. Photo by Haans Petruschke.

Black-headed Gull - Conneaut Harbor, Ashtabula Co., March 2000. Photo by Haans Petruschke.



California Gull - Caesar Creek State Park, Warren Co., 15 May 2000. Photo by Tom Uhlman.